



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100	101	102	103	104	105	106	107	108	109	110	111	112	113	114	115	116	117	118	119	120	121	122	123	124	125	126	127	128	129	130	131	132	133	134	135	136	137	138	139	140	141	142	143	144	145	146	147	148	149	150	151	152	153	154	155	156	157	158	159	160	161	162	163	164	165	166	167	168	169	170	171	172	173	174	175	176	177	178	179	180	181	182	183	184	185	186	187	188	189	190	191	192	193	194	195	196	197	198	199	200	201	202	203	204	205	206	207	208	209	210	211	212	213	214	215	216	217	218	219	220	221	222	223	224	225	226	227	228	229	230	231	232	233	234	235	236	237	238	239	240	241	242	243	244	245	246	247	248	249	250	251	252	253	254	255	256	257	258	259	260	261	262	263	264	265	266	267	268	269	270	271	272	273	274	275	276	277	278	279	280	281	282	283	284	285	286	287	288	289	290	291	292	293	294	295	296	297	298	299	300	301	302	303	304	305	306	307	308	309	310	311	312	313	314	315	316	317	318	319	320	321	322	323	324	325	326	327	328	329	330	331	332	333	334	335	336	337	338	339	340	341	342	343	344	345	346	347	348	349	350	351	352	353	354	355	356	357	358	359	360	361	362	363	364	365	366	367	368	369	370	371	372	373	374	375	376	377	378	379	380	381	382	383	384	385	386	387	388	389	390	391	392	393	394	395	396	397	398	399	400	401	402	403	404	405	406	407	408	409	410	411	412	413	414	415	416	417	418	419	420	421	422	423	424	425	426	427	428	429	430	431	432	433	434	435	436	437	438	439	440	441	442	443	444	445	446	447	448	449	450	451	452	453	454	455	456	457	458	459	460	461	462	463	464	465	466	467	468	469	470	471	472	473	474	475	476	477	478	479	480	481	482	483	484	485	486	487	488	489	490	491	492	493	494	495	496	497	498	499	500	501	502	503	504	505	506	507	508	509	510	511	512	513	514	515	516	517	518	519	520	521	522	523	524	525	526	527	528	529	530	531	532	533	534	535	536	537	538	539	540	541	542	543	544	545	546	547	548	549	550	551	552	553	554	555	556	557	558	559	560	561	562	563	564	565	566	567	568	569	570	571	572	573	574	575	576	577	578	579	580	581	582	583	584	585	586	587	588	589	590	591	592	593	594	595	596	597	598	599	600	601	602	603	604	605	606	607	608	609	610	611	612	613	614	615	616	617	618	619	620	621	622	623	624	625	626	627	628	629	630	631	632	633	634	635	636	637	638	639	640	641	642	643	644	645	646	647	648	649	650	651	652	653	654	655	656	657	658	659	660	661	662	663	664	665	666	667	668	669	670	671	672	673	674	675	676	677	678	679	680	681	682	683	684	685	686	687	688	689	690	691	692	693	694	695	696	697	698	699	700	701	702	703	704	705	706	707	708	709	710	711	712	713	714	715	716	717	718	719	720	721	722	723	724	725	726	727	728	729	730	731	732	733	734	735	736	737	738	739	740	741	742	743	744	745	746	747	748	749	750	751	752	753	754	755	756	757	758	759	760	761	762	763	764	765	766	767	768	769	770	771	772	773	774	775	776	777	778	779	780	781	782	783	784	785	786	787	788	789	790	791	792	793	794	795	796	797	798	799	800	801	802	803	804	805	806	807	808	809	810	811	812	813	814	815	816	817	818	819	820	821	822	823	824	825	826	827	828	829	830	831	832	833	834	835	836	837	838	839	840	841	842	843	844	845	846	847	848	849	850	851	852	853	854	855	856	857	858	859	860	861	862	863	864	865	866	867	868	869	870	871	872	873	874	875	876	877	878	879	880	881	882	883	884	885	886	887	888	889	890	891	892	893	894	895	896	897	898	899	900	901	902	903	904	905	906	907	908	909	910	911	912	913	914	915	916	917	918	919	920	921	922	923	924	925	926	927	928	929	930	931	932	933	934	935	936	937	938	939	940	941	942	943	944	945	946	947	948	949	950	951	952	953	954	955	956	957	958	959	960	961	962	963	964	965	966	967	968	969	970	971	972	973	974	975	976	977	978	979	980	981	982	983	984	985	986	987	988	989	990	991	992	993	994	995	996	997	998	999	1000	1001	1002	1003	1004	1005	1006	1007	1008	1009	1010	1011	1012	1013	1014	1015	1016	1017	1018	1019	1020	1021	1022	1023	1024	1025	1026	1027	1028	1029	1030	1031	1032	1033	1034	1035	1036	1037	1038	1039	1040	1041	1042	1043	1044	1045	1046	1047	1048	1049	1050	1051	1052	1053	1054	1055	1056	1057	1058	1059	1060	1061	1062	1063	1064	1065	1066	1067	1068	1069	1070	1071	1072	1073	1074	1075	1076	1077	1078	1079	1080	1081	1082	1083	1084	1085	1086	1087	1088	1089	1090	1091	1092	1093	1094	1095	1096	1097	1098	1099	1100	1101	1102	1103	1104	1105	1106	1107	1108	1109	1110	1111	1112	1113	1114	1115	1116	1117	1118	1119	1120	1121	1122	1123	1124	1125	1126	1127	1128	1129	1130	1131	1132	1133	1134	1135	1136	1137	1138	1139	1140	1141	1142	1143	1144	1145	1146	1147	1148	1149	1150	1151	1152	1153	1154	1155	1156	1157	1158	1159	1160	1161	1162	1163	1164	1165	1166	1167	1168	1169	1170	1171	1172	1173	1174	1175	1176	1177	1178	1179	1180	1181	1182	1183	1184	1185	1186	1187	1188	1189	1190	1191	1192	1193	1194	1195	1196	1197	1198	1199	1200	1201	1202	1203	1204	1205	1206	1207	1208	1209	1210	1211	1212	1213	1214	1215	1216	1217	1218	1219	1220	1221	1222	1223	1224	1225	1226	1227	1228	1229	1230	1231	1232	1233	1234	1235	1236	1237	1238	1239	1240	1241	1242	1243	1244	1245	1246	1247	1248	1249	1250	1251	1252	1253	1254	1255	1256	1257	1258	1259	1260	1261	1262	1263	1264	1265	1266	1267	1268	1269	1270	1271	1272	1273	1274	1275	1276	1277	1278	1279	1280	1281	1282	1283	1284	1285	1286	1287	1288	1289	1290	1291	1292	1293	1294	1295	1296	1297	1298	1299	1300	1301	1302	1303	1304	1305	1306	1307	1308	1309	1310	1311	1312	1313	1314	1315	1316	1317	1318	1319	1320	1321	1322	1323	1324	1325	1326	1327	1328	1329	1330	1331	1332	1333	1334	1335	1336	1337	1338	1339	1340	1341	1342	1343	1344	1345	1346	1347	1348	1349	1350	1351	1352	1353	1354	1355	1356	1357	1358	1359	1360	1361	1362	1363	1364	1365	1366	1367	1368	1369	1370	1371	1372	1373	1374	1375	1376	1377	1378	1379	1380	1381	1382	1383	1384	1385	1386	1387	1388	1389	1390	1391	1392	1393	1394	1395	1396	1397	1398	1399	1400	1401	1402	1403	1404	1405	1406	1407	1408	1409	1410	1411	1412	1413	1414	1415	1416	1417	1418	1419	1420	1421	1422	1423	1424	1425	1426	1427	1428	1429	1430	1431	1432	1433	1434	1435	1436	1437	1438	1439	1440	1441	1442	1443	1444	1445	1446	1447	1448	1449	1450	1451	1452	1453	1454	1455	1456	1457	1458	1459	1460	1461	1462	1463	1464	1465	1466	1467	1468	1469	1470	1471	1472	1473	1474	1475	1476	1477	1478	1479	1480	1481	1482	1483	1484	1485	1486	1487	1488	1489	1490	1491	1492	1493	1494	1495	14
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	----



THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
LIBRARY





THE
BOOK OF SYMBOLS.



THE
BOOK OF SYMBOLS:

A SERIES OF
SEVENTY-FIVE SHORT ESSAYS
ON
MORALS, RELIGION, AND PHILOSOPHY.
EACH ESSAY ILLUSTRATING AN
ANCIENT SYMBOL OR MORAL PRECEPT.

By ROBERT MUSHET.

SECOND EDITION.

~~~~~  
LONDON:  
CHAPMAN AND HALL, 186 STRAND.

MDCCCXLVII. }M

**EDINBURGH, PRINTED BY NEILL AND COMPANY.**

## CONTENTS.

|                                                                                                                                                          | Page |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| I. The Love of Knowledge ; its Pleasures and Advantages, . . . . .                                                                                       | 1    |
| II. Ancient Education ; Silence and Loquacity ; the Reserved Habit of Authors, &c. . . . .                                                               | 15   |
| III. The Desire of Fame, . . . . .                                                                                                                       | 21   |
| IV. The Love of Truth, . . . . .                                                                                                                         | 27   |
| V. On Solitude, . . . . .                                                                                                                                | 32   |
| VI. On Death, and the Immortality of the Soul ; Metempsychosis and the Ancient Doctrine of Emanation and Absorption, . . . . .                           | 44   |
| VII. On Preparation for Death, . . . . .                                                                                                                 | 61   |
| VIII. On the Value of Time, . . . . .                                                                                                                    | 67   |
| IX. On Industry, . . . . .                                                                                                                               | 72   |
| X. On Trifling, . . . . .                                                                                                                                | 82   |
| XI. On Early Rising ; a Vision of Disembodied Spirits ; and a Rhapsody, . . . . .                                                                        | 89   |
| XII. Propriety of Times and Seasons ; the Effect of the Body on the Intellect ; Literary Pursuits, . . . . .                                             | 99   |
| XIII. On Obscure Writings : Style ; and Strictures on the Literature of the Age, . . . . .                                                               | 106  |
| XIV. On an Active Life ; the <i>Summum Bonum</i> ; and a Defence of Epicurus, . . . . .                                                                  | 114  |
| XV. On Peace, . . . . .                                                                                                                                  | 125  |
| XVI. On Anger and Malice, . . . . .                                                                                                                      | 130  |
| XVII. On the Practice of Virtue, . . . . .                                                                                                               | 133  |
| XVIII. On the Passion of Revenge ; the Virtue of Fortitude ; and on Duelling, . . . . .                                                                  | 140  |
| XIX. On the Virtue of Mercy or Compassion ; the Theory and Practice of Religion contrasted ; Ancient Moralists and Modern Christians compared, . . . . . | 148  |
| XX. On Benevolence, . . . . .                                                                                                                            | 155  |





## P R E F A C E.



No evidence is needed to prove the general interest man takes in whatever concerns the past ages of the world; an interest common to every period, claiming the title of civilized. The vast labours of the learned, displayed in many profound historical researches, in antiquarian pursuits, in critical questions on philosophy and literature, which appear unimportant, if not frivolous, to the common understanding, as well as the homage which has always been paid to classical learning, and to those noble languages in which it is recorded, all tend to shew the interest and curiosity excited by the concerns of antiquity. The same interest and curiosity which urge some to devote their time and talents to the great and exciting field of History, in which, after all, we find little more than the meagre details of unjust wars, political strife, internal broils, intrigues of men for power, reckless ambition, or the endless conflict of passion, dispose different minds to the quieter field of Philosophy and Literature. In the latter, there is a more permanent interest; because, while the actions of men cease to have any influence over their

distant posterity, their systems of philosophy, their literature, their modes of thought, may still exercise an extended influence over the minds of men, in their opinions, their tastes, and habits of thought. The conquests of Alexander of Macedon are still read with avidity; the conflicts of the Greek republics still maintain their interest; but as to any permanent influence over the human mind, they have none; the former only awakening in the puerile heart latent feelings of ambition, while the latter seems only useful as a beacon to some men, by which to warn us against the horrors of democracy. But no one can deny, that the philosophy of ancient times, as well as their literature, have a remarkable power over the thoughts and opinions of men. And while this power exists, man will always desire to know something of the original fountain, whose immortal waters impregnate the streams of human thought and speculation. Moreover, there is a kind of romance of life in the affairs of the ancient world, charming our minds the nearer we approach the realms of doubt and conjecture; affording such a field of speculation as the curious mind delights in: for if all past were as intimately known to us as things present, the charm would cease, our curiosity would fade away, our interest would die; while the artificial estimation in which we are pleased to hold men's sayings and doings in antiquity, would fall to the low standard by which we value, perhaps more truly, the events of modern times, and the labours of men.

This peculiar interest we have in the history of man, and in all his works in ages long past, makes any contrast between the moral precepts of antiquity—efforts of natural reason—and the system taught in the pages of Christian truth—the work of Divinity—a task both pleasing

and instructive. The speculative mind possesses a latent desire to know to what height the unassisted reason has attained in the discovery, or in the elucidation, of those sublime questions of religion and moral duties, which engage the thoughts of reflecting beings. It is not enough to be satisfied with the incalculable blessings we now enjoy; but he would know what men thought, by what rules they acted, what laws regulated their lives, and restrained them from crimes against society, and sins against an acknowledged, but an unknown, God, in times when he imagines the world was involved in moral error and religious darkness.

There is not only a pleasure, but there is a deep philosophy, in the contrast of pagan truth and Christian revelation. For as Revealed religion is only the true and faithful copy of the Natural, purged, as it were, of all the errors, superstition, false theories, and puerile speculations of men; of the complicated devices, and "pious frauds" of priestcraft; of the corrupt versions of truth and false glosses created, propagated, and enforced, for interested motives by despotic rulers (properly called statecraft); of the less venal, but not less erroneous systems of the philosophic schools: so Christian truth and Christian morals are but the fair copies of that natural truth and goodness existing in the soul of him who loves virtue and truth; for truly it may be said, the same Being is the source of both. As difficult is it to say where natural religion ends, and where revealed begins (they so mingle and blend together), as to point out the line of demarcation on the edge of the rainbow, where the colour imperceptibly dissolves in the circumjacent air. For truth and virtue are

the same truth and virtue, whether discovered to exist in a pagan or in a Christian philosopher.

The beautiful simplicity of the Christian moral system has not failed to charm even those who would deny its divine origin. They recognise its comparative perfection, but are insensible to the proof of its source discoverable in this very simplicity. It is the systems and theories of men which are complex and intricate, "admirable for the fineness of thread and work, but of no substance or profit," as says Lord Bacon; it is the fine-spun web of human speculation, which entangles truth in its meshes; but what is divine, must necessarily be simple, because truth is simple: Wisdom adorns herself from the simplest wardrobe, and so Religion must also be simple, in spite of all the incomprehensible theories, and senseless dogmas human reason evolves from her simple page. The same simplicity we are charmed with in Christ's morals, we find carried out into all nature; for both are results of what is simple—the wisdom of God.

Simplicity, which is the grace of Christian truth, is what gives perpetuity to proverbs and moral maxims; for the human mind has a permanent delight in simplicity. And there must also be true wisdom where this permanent delight is afforded. For while the finest cobwebs of human intellect, spun by the aspiring reason, on which much profitless labour has been spent, have been all in turn rejected and swept away, in the great trial of time and experience, and which are only now remembered as ingenious relics of human folly, those laconic proverbs and familiar maxims still remain, and are repeated; for they contain the essence of knowledge and experience, called wisdom;

the whole stream of a life, as it were, being concentrated into one drop of precious truth. Such was the wisdom of Solomon,—such the wisdom of those ancient sages whose sayings have come down to us. They endure, because they are true; they are esteemed, because practical; they are popular, because simple and easy.

Not so, however, with SYMBOLS; those ancient phrases in which moral precepts, and religious truths, and philosophic tenets, were conveyed in such a way as neither to be simple nor obvious. On this account they could not become popular, nor would they be generally known or appreciated. As in the intrinsic beauty of a diamond, an artist was required to rub away the external crust, and fashion them, and display the inward and hidden brilliancy. Few were there to undertake this labour; and none were there, that I know of, whose efforts were attended with marked success.

A symbol, in the ordinary acceptation of the word, is “a sign or representation of any moral thing by the images or properties of natural things. Thus, a lion is the *symbol* of courage; a lamb the *symbol* of meekness or patience.” It is clear that types, enigmas, parables, fables, allegories, emblems, and hieroglyphics, all partake of the nature and character of symbols. The symbols called Pythagorean may, perhaps, be classed under the head of enigmas, though the rule will admit of numerous exceptions.

Every one conversant with the peculiarities of the Pythagorean system, will not be surprised at this mode of conveying moral duties in symbolical phrases. Of all ancient schools of philosophy, the Pythagorean least courted popularity. They well knew the significance of that

phrase in Scripture which we now daily infringe—*Cast not pearls before swine.*

As the great master himself had to undergo severe initiatory trials before he gained the confidence of the Egyptian priests, and was admitted into their secret stores of mystic learning, so he deemed it salutary to his pupils to pass through a similar ordeal, but, in comparison, far less severe. Besides, he had such veneration for that great goddess Athena, who was coeval with the foundations of the world, that he thought it no more than a mark of respect due to her lofty character, not to admit all indiscriminately to her shrine. That secrecy and reserve (probably borrowed from Egypt) were assumed to deter the unworthy from his school, while his silent-system was rigorously carried out to drive away the vain babblers from his doors—a pest as noxious then as now, though a body perhaps far less numerous.

As among the learned it is generally agreed that Pythagoras never committed any thing to writing, we must consider the SYMBOLS rather Pythagorean, than of Pythagoras, though we may have no reason to doubt of their originating from him, as he seems to have introduced this peculiar mode of teaching into Greece. Who had the honour of first making the collection is a question that cannot easily be answered. Happily they do exist; and with that we must rest satisfied. That those I have chosen are all veritably Pythagorean, I will not pledge myself. Let those who are better informed, by a simple abstraction of the mind, separate the true from the spurious; as for others who have faith, let them be wise, and mar not the beauty and harmony of the work.

There are some others which, for certain reasons, I

have rejected ; as, " Turn aside from an edged tool. Sail not on the ground. Discourse not of Pythagorean doctrines without light. Above all things, govern your tongue," &c.

A word as to the character of this eminent man and philosopher, who has not received justice at the hands of the learned. In most lives of him he stands out in relief as a kind of impostor, who resorted to many contemptible arts to deceive men, and excite vulgar curiosity ; as when it is said he retired for some years into a cave to raise awe and wonder among the populace, and pretended to work miracles in order to establish the divine origin of his doctrines, and, as some think, of himself. But when we discover that the most impartial and judicious writers, while they relate these absurd fables, at the same time admit the uncertainty of every event or circumstance in the life of Pythagoras, and confess to the lies and forgeries propagated by his later disciples, who perverted his philosophy in every part, we may reasonably hesitate in assenting to any of those other fables and descriptions which these writers think better authenticated.\*

The cause of all the misconception may be traced to those peculiar modes of teaching which I have elsewhere pointed out. These modes may be good or bad, but they are certainly by no means ridiculous or absurd.

When we know, that among the Pythagoreans the exact sciences formed an important branch of education ; when we know how, by a fundamental rule, the school could not be popular, the fictitious character given to this great sage dissolves away ; a character appropriate enough to devotees

\* *Vide* Enfield's History of Philosophy.

of magic, or the astrologic art, but inconsistent with the grave, thoughtful, matter-of-fact resolver of mathematical theorems.

Many there are who assert his pretensions to supernatural power ; many still hang to those puerile fables collected of him, and fondly repeat them ; as when he cured an impious ox from the desire to eat beans, by whispering a few magical words in his ear ; as when he repaired to Delos, and, after presenting an offering of cakes, received from Apollo some moral dogmas which he passed off as divine precepts ; as when he visited the island of Crete, where he was conducted by the priests of Cybele into the cave of Mount Ida, where Jupiter was buried, and there conversed with Epimenides, an eminent pretender to prophetic powers, by whom he was initiated into the Grecian mysteries ; or when he shewed, or pretended to shew, his golden thigh at the Olympic games, in order to convince him he was Apollo. Others may still increase the catalogue of wonders, and multiply the idle fables related of him ; as when he told the fishermen the exact number of fish they had in their net before it was drawn from the water ; as when, by word of mouth, he tamed a bear that was laying the country waste ; that he called down an eagle from the sky by the agency of some secret spell ; that he possessed almost the power of being in two places very far distant from each other at the same time ; and that a reverential river, as he crossed it, exclaimed in accents not to be misunderstood, " Hail Pythagoras !" But when they shall have attentively read, and well digested, the following simple exposition of some of his doctrines, and peculiarities of his philosophy, they



will, I think, see reasons for consigning such fables to the contempt and oblivion they so justly merit.\*

Furthermore, I shall expect every judicious and candid reader to be agreeably surprised by the precious extract I have, with so much care, skill, and zeal, extracted from what might be thought to yield nothing, or, at least, nothing useful or profitable. And while he generally overlooks and palliates the author's deficiencies, he will, at the same time, not fail to admire the excellent truths concealed under the symbols—truths and doctrines of surprising purity for the time they were discovered. For although a rational Christian may be wedded to his own system as all-perfect, all-sufficient, it becomes him not to be so bigoted as to despise and repudiate the good which man has, in ages of comparative ignorance, brought to light through the means of common sense and sound reason ; for what is really found to be true in a pagan system cannot be false in the Christian, because, as I have already said, God is the source of both.

Nay, he ought rather to rejoice when he can discover a few straggling broken rays of hallowed light emerging from the gloom and twilight in which the mind of man was steeped before Christ appeared ; for every brilliant scintillation from the mind of a Pythagoras or a Plato ; every discovery of truth ; every noble speculation on religion and morals, are all proofs of the longing of man for more certain knowledge, and his innate desire for that sublime revelation it pleased God to make in after ages.

Every one now making religion or morals the theme of his contemplations, or the subject of his writing, is

\* These fables were the invention of the later Platonic philosophers, and therefore unworthy of criticism.

respected by virtue of the pursuit that engages him ; and if so, why should we refuse to ancient philosophers the same respect, when there must have been something essentially good and noble in their minds to have led them to reflections and speculations on questions in which there were no inducements of pleasure or profit ? With them it was a kind of piety. In the great questions of God, the origin of the world, the destiny and origin of man, they found subjects of surpassing interest that elevated and ennobled the mind in the very act of their contemplation ; they found subjects beyond human reason, but which human reason was eager and impatient to understand.

The well cultivated religious mind is not satisfied with a mere formal homage to a creed ; he cannot believe all things revealed and not wish for more ; the mere fact of there being a God will not hinder him from soaring to the contemplation of that which he cannot discover in revelation—the nature and mode of existence of that Being ; so the philosophic pagan who discovered manifest evidence of God in the world, or in the general testimony of men, was not satisfied in the negative belief, but would speculate and conjecture, and try and unravel the mysteries in which the subject was involved.

Many eminent writers have borne witness to the purity of Plato's ideas on religion and morals : that purity, which has elevated him to the rank of being only second to Jesus Christ, will be discovered to an equal, if not greater, extent in those symbols of Pythagoras.

If the reader will conceive in his mind one of those ancient sepulchral chambers, in which darkness was made visible by the faint yet steady light of the everlasting lamp, and then all at once imagine it lighted up by a thousand

torches, he may have an appropriate simile of the effect of Christian truth brought to illustrate or illuminate the obscure ideas of the pagan mind. The symbolical philosophy appeared at first as a kind of gloomy, mysterious twilight, in which I beheld objects as if thrown carelessly together, without order, or system, or motive; but by the lamp of Christian truth the gloom was dispelled, and all became clear and manifest. What I discovered is recorded in the following pages.\*

---

I may here intimate, that these Essays were composed during the intervals of business, as a pastime or amusement, and not always under the most favourable circumstances. The benignant reader will, therefore, overlook the many deficiencies or (it may be) errors in which they abound; but while extending this indulgence to him as an author of little experience, and with less leisure at his command, he will give him credit for *briefness*—a quality not of common occurrence in these days. The great number of subjects rendered this necessary, as I was determined from the outset to avoid making a great book, which most now agree in thinking to be a great evil.

Briefness, however, may sometimes be carried too far, so as to cramp the thoughts as well as the style of a writer, and, in some instances, I am sensible of this defect in myself; but should leisure and other circumstances favour me, I may hereafter make a selection of subjects from this work, and treat them with the justice and completeness their merit demands.

February 1844.

\* It will be observed that I have adopted the collection made by Dacier; and, in most cases, I have followed his interpretations.



## THE LOVE OF KNOWLEDGE ; ITS PLEASURES AND ADVANTAGES.

~~~~~  
Symbol I.—*Faculae sedem ne extergito.*

Wipe not out the place of the torch.
~~~~~

1. THE love of knowledge is a passion inconceivable to all who have never felt its power. Less intemperate than the passion of love, it is as delightful, but more constant and far happier. When once it takes possession of the soul, it never leaves it. It burns amid all discouragements, and yields not to any of (all) the vicissitudes of life. The love of knowledge is a "Pierian spring" of tranquillity and happiness, that is hardly surpassed by any thing on earth ; and he who drinks of it has a taste created in him not to be imagined by the ignorant. The fabled talismanic power of old is not to be compared with the love of knowledge, which exercises an influence that terminates not but in death ; subjects all things to its sway ; brings the passions, the tastes, the pursuits, and occupations of life, and the pleasures of the world, to yield it willing and pleasing homage. To gratify this over-ruling passion, the advantages of the world, the pomps, and honours, and riches, eagerly sought by most men, are all abandoned ; to indulge in its marvellous fascination, friendship has been

pleasures is to diffuse its light indiscriminately to all mankind. It is supremely elevating in its influence ; it commands respect and admiration ; exalts the possessor above his natural rank, however obscure, and makes him worthy of higher titles and honours than monarchs can bestow.

4. There is no benefactor of his species equal to the man who stamps his mind on works of literature, and gives his knowledge to the world. He confers benefits that are felt by generations which follow him ; and with labour and devotion not to be imagined by the ignorant, creates delightful and elevating pleasures for posterity. While the great, ennobled by rank and the honours of kings, are forgotten after one generation is past, the servants of posterity, as Bacon calls himself and others like him, the poor, humble, and in their time, neglected devotees of knowledge, live for ever in their works. Their fame long outlives the glory of conquerors, and the policy of statesmen. The worldly honours of many authors are forgot, and they themselves would have passed into oblivion but for their works on literature, history, or philosophy. It is thus that genius elevates man above the rank of kings ; and however much the world may neglect the man of genius while he lives, yet posterity shall pay such honour to his memory as to prove, that substantially the mind is that only which distinguishes one man from another ; and that this is a true and just verdict, may be made manifest, by comparing the everlasting blessings he bestows on his fellow-creatures, with all the passing show of kings and conquerors.

5. Among literary men, the distinctions of country, of kindred, of language, or of creed, that affect to prejudice and bigotry most other men, have no place. They are

truly cosmopolites, or citizens of the world; the free-masonry of literature makes them all brothers and kinsmen. A French writer said of men of genius, that they have neither ancestors nor posterity, but that they alone compose their whole race; for although learning makes them brothers, and citizens of the world, it gives them no sons for posterity, as genius cannot be bequeathed or perpetuated in any other. They are true philanthropists; they confer blessings without reward, and benefits without price; all they ask or desire is the applause of men now, and fame hereafter; of no value to the giver, but coveted as above all price by the receiver. For fame, what labour do men undergo! What anxious incessant toil! What privations, what self-denial, is borne for a niche in the temple of fame! Fame, unlike the fleeting applause of the present, often undeserved, is rarely bestowed but on the highest degree of merit; and men, therefore, to secure it hereafter, know the toil and care that must be endured.

6. Demosthenes, the great orator of Greece, said,—“O Athenians, how have I laboured to have you talk of me!” an emphatic testimony to what man will undergo for applause and celebrity. A history of the labours bestowed on works of fame, would be more incredible than any fiction that ever had its being in human fancy. The physical labours of Hercules would appear insignificant in comparison. This history we find partly supplied by an instructive and industrious modern author, who informs us, that “Ariosto wrote sixteen different ways the celebrated stanza descriptive of a tempest, as appears by his MSS. at Ferrara; and the version he preferred was the last of the sixteen.”

“We know that Petrarch made forty-four alterations of

a single verse; 'whether for the thought, the expression, or the harmony, it is evident that as many operations in the heart, the head, or the ear, of the poet occurred,' observes a man of genius, Ugo Foscola."

"The existing manuscripts of Rousseau display as many erasures as those of Ariosto or Petrarch."

"The memoir of Gibbon was composed seven or nine times, and after all was left unfinished; and Buffon tells us, he wrote his *Epoques de la Nature* eighteen times before it satisfied his taste."

"We may now inspect the severe correction of Tasso's muse in the fac-simile of a page of his manuscript in Mr Dibdin's late Tour. She seems to have inflicted tortures on his pen, surpassing even those which may be seen in the fac-simile page of Pope's Homer;"—given in the *Curiosities of Literature*.

7. No one but a man of literature can know, or conceive, by what slow and gradual steps works of celebrity are brought to perfection. What is read with ease and fluency was produced by great labour and severe correction. The original idea, like the earth before the creation of man, was a chaos of darkness and confusion; and it is only after mighty energies, and unceasing toil, that the work reaches that beauty and proportion, in which we read it with delight and admiration. "The state of the mind in the progress of composition," observes the same writer, "is thus beautifully described by Dryden,—'When it was only a confused mass of thoughts, tumbling over one another in the dark; when the fancy was yet in its first work, moving the sleeping images of things towards the light, there to be distinguished, and then either to be chosen or rejected by the judgment.'" And Gibbon says of his immortal



history,—“ At the onset all was dark and doubtful ; even the title of the work, the true era of the decline and fall of the empire, &c. I was often tempted to cast away the labour of seven years.”

8. Can we help, therefore, being grateful to such men as have spent their best days, and often consumed the midnight lamp, for our instruction and gratification ? In times of darkness and ignorance, they were lights sent to enlighten our path ; like the perpetual lamps of the ancients, they spread beams over the obscure world around ; and though sometimes the torch flickered in its socket, as if expiring for ever, yet again it burst forth at intervals, and served, in after ages, as a beacon to guide the steps of ignorance, and to recover the lost knowledge of the world. Hallowed be the memories of those who deemed it a crime to wipe out the place of the torch, and in secrecy and fear watched the sacred fire, as a mother watches her infant child ! As from one single spark we may give light in abundance to all ; so from the mouldering embers in dark ages, and brutal ignorance, we have lighted our torch, and blessed the soul of man by the exalting influences of knowledge.

9. Many have affected to despise the acquisition of knowledge ; many will not acquire it, because of the labour ; and some dread its universal diffusion, as if it were a thing pregnant with danger to society. Those who can despise such a blessing, or those who will not incur the labour of acquiring it, because it withdraws the mind from pleasure and excitement, are unworthy of ever feeling or knowing it. And this we can say, that, in rejecting knowledge, and its product wisdom, when she calls aloud in the streets, they lose a delightful and peace-creating pleasure, for which

nothing of the world can be a substitute. They may pass through life agreeably enough without knowledge, it is true; but their pleasures are of a baser kind; and are as inferior to others as the pleasures of the senses are inferior to those of the intellect. Having no capacity for pleasures of this kind, it may be said, "ignorance is bliss;" but such an argument might prove as rationally, that man should be a beast rather than a man, for an animal has its fill of certain kinds of pleasure. Every object which cultivates the mind, purifies the taste, increases the relish for rational enjoyment, is worth our acquisition. Nothing does this more than knowledge; for it endows us with a capacity for appreciating the great monuments of learning and wisdom; for admiring and estimating (as far as we are able) the works of God in the creation; it refines all our tastes and pursuits, tending naturally to mere animal enjoyment and grosser pleasures; enlightens our judgment; quickens our perceptions of the good and the beautiful; purifies and subdues our passions; refines our whole moral and intellectual being; and, finally, makes us follow out the object and end of our creation,—something surely higher than corporeal pleasure, or sensual delight. Above all, knowledge enables the mind fully to appreciate, and leads to the better comprehension of, that sublime revelation made to man in the Christian religion; for in the scheme of Christianity there is implied an esoteric and exoteric,—an internal and external system; one for the ignorant, sufficient for all purposes of salvation, another for the sublimer nature, that, from knowledge and reflection, can contemplate the mysteries of uncreated wisdom. As no man can fully, or in any great degree, estimate the beauty of poetry, or the enchanting sounds of music, without a gift

of nature; so no one is capable of entering into the spiritual, or esoteric, manifestation of the Christian religion, when his mind is clouded by ignorance, or paralyzed by the inactivity of its higher faculties. Even to appreciate any work of learning or of literature, we must have some learning and some literary attainments. And this, and many other advantages, are lost by the want of knowledge.

10. As to those who dread, or pretend to dread, the universal diffusion of knowledge, upon the absurd plea of its being pregnant with danger to society, their arguments are sufficiently refuted by the general change in opinion as men have become wiser; and by the events of civilized life. The opinion which was once arrogantly maintained by many, has now been driven for refuge into the narrowest and obscurest haunts of bigotry and intolerance; it is scouted by all the rational; derided by the man of the world; and even those disposed to indulge it are silent. We may be sure that when the bigot is put to shame, or when the voice of self-interest is silenced (for some find their interest in the ignorance and stupidity of mankind), truth has at last come to light. This change in the opinion of the public is itself one of the fruits of the diffusion of knowledge.

The same may be said of another class who have represented knowledge to be inimical to religion. There are few, if any, now bold enough to maintain such an opinion. They find themselves in a dilemma from which they cannot escape; because, if knowledge is the enemy of religion, ignorance must be its fit associate, and proper friend; and if infidelity be the offspring of knowledge, then it becomes manifest that religion is a deceit that can

only be upheld by ignorance ; for whenever knowledge is thrown upon the mind, men become infidels, because (for what other reason can be given ?) the deceit is detected and exposed. So far is such an opinion from being true, or well grounded, that experience teaches us that knowledge well applied is the best handmaid of religion, and therefore the strongest enemy with which the infidel has to combat.

Those individuals, or classes, in society, who would be the last to abandon opinions, now happily antiquated and exploded, are few, among whom the most prominent and influential are perhaps kings and priests ; for *knowledge being power*, the former naturally dread its encroachments on their arbitrary wills, while the latter discover in it the greatest antagonist to priestcraft and superstition, through which they have, at least in times past, subdued the abject mind, and frightened the timid imagination.

11. Christianity is said, with truth, to have been the greatest cause in civilizing mankind ; but they who make the assertion give not so clear and obvious a reason for the effect. They disclaim in language neither accurate nor conclusive, that the Christian religion being the best of all religions, necessarily makes men better, and so gradually civilizes them. If Christianity were the sole cause of civilization, the effects would have been regular and constant ; it would be the same in all countries, and at every period of time. But history and experience teach us, that this noble religion has, in times past, degenerated (and it may again degenerate) into superstition and barbarism. The same page of history shews also, that the Christian religion has been purified by the effect of knowledge, and the enlightenment of the human mind. If

Christianity gives a stimulus to the mind, refines and elevates the moral sense, and provokes a taste and appetite for intellectual pursuits; so the diffusion of knowledge, in return, acts upon Christianity, as professed and practised by mankind. We dare not say that any knowledge of men can improve or refine to a higher degree the system, and doctrines, of the Christian religion, as given by Jesus Christ, but it may restore and maintain their intrinsic purity.

Knowledge, therefore, instead of being an enemy to religion, is the best friend and support of it, and has ever been an active and powerful co-agent with Christianity in the civilization and advancement of the human race. While Christianity has given a wider scope to the objects of knowledge, knowledge has also brought the practice of religion to a nearer approximation to the theory. It has in a great measure abolished the numberless superstitious rites that crept into religion; the errors that corrupted it; the vain deceits and pious frauds which debased it; knowledge has emancipated the soul from the dreadful thralldom of priestcraft, and the fetters of intolerance; for where it comes light goes before it; what it touches it purifies; and, like the rising sun on "the misty mountain's top," it drives away the gloom of darkness, and restores us to the light of day.

12. The saying of Bacon is familiar to all: "A little knowledge inclineth man's mind to atheism; but depth in philosophy bringeth men's minds about to religion." The same idea is elegantly conveyed in a verse of Pope's admirable *Essay on Criticism*:

"A little learning is a dangerous thing;  
Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring;  
Their shallow draughts intoxicate the brain,  
And drinking largely sobers us again."

A little knowledge makes man vain and presumptuous ; but deep knowledge makes him diffident and modest ; for he soon finds that below the deep there is a deeper still,—a well which the capacity of man, or the time allotted to him on earth, will not permit him to fathom. Like Sir Isaac Newton, he becomes subdued by the extent of knowledge, and the insignificance of what he has acquired compared to what remains, and considers himself as a child gathering pebbles on the shore of the great ocean of truth.

It is the vanity and presumption generated in the shallow mind that leads man to doubt, or deny, the existence of a God. His mind opening to one small part of the great scheme of nature, is dazzled by that one ray of light, and in arrogance and presumption concludes, from that little he may judge of the whole. In perceiving one link of the great chain of causes, he rests there, and is satisfied ; whereas, if he extended his inquiry, he would discover more links before than after the point on which he had fixed for the cause of the existence of the world. Human experience with him is a great test of truth, and he ridicules every history or declaration not borne out by experience ; and in this manner would support the African's incredulity in frozen or solid water ; for the African's experience never having comprehended this common fact in colder climates, he would have as good grounds as the atheist for denying what he could not understand. Drinking deeper of the Pierian spring, he will be no longer intoxicated with conceit in his own acquirements, but will perceive that there is not only a great fountain of which he has only tasted the overflowings, but something besides not to be brought into man's philosophy,—the deep mysteries of God, and the secret, veiled workings of his agent Nature.

13. The man of little knowledge turns all into mere opinion ; but the profound and learned philosopher cares only for knowledge as an instrument for the discovery of truth. To this end alone do all his labours and inquiries lead. He will not support an opinion because it is curious, or novel, for the sake of attracting applause or notoriety ; but will subject all speculations of the mind, on the deep philosophy of nature, to what he believes to be consistent with truth. And to know what is true, is not to be acquired by a partial or imperfect investigation of the laws and phenomena of nature, or by hastening to conclusions not well supported, but by laborious and patient study and examination.

14. In conclusion, what more (after all the eloquent appeals, and captivating descriptions afforded in the lives and works of men of learning) need be said on a subject so familiar to all, and on which there is not much novelty to inspire interest, or attract attention. Knowledge, like the wisdom of Solomon, cries aloud in the streets, and whoever will pursue it, has not the excuse to plead, that he cannot find it.

If we were allowed to reflect for a moment on our own lot, past and present, and to review the days and nights spent in the pursuit of, and indulgence in, this delightful pleasure, we would truly say, that the consolations derived from learning and philosophy have been such, that we would willingly begin life again, and traverse the same path to which inclination or accident directed us in the days of our youth. As we said, the desire or appetite of knowledge is never satisfied ; as its gratification is calm, and not intemperate, or of an excited nature, there can be no

satiety ; but the gratification and desire are ever interchangeable.

The proper and laudable occupation of time is instrumental to man's happiness, and how can the intervals of time, which most men fly from, be more rationally and pleasingly filled up, than in the acquisition of knowledge, and improvement of the mind ?

He who so employs his leisure hours, or even the great bulk of his time, shall feel none of those impatient longings for the coming day, or the coming hour, but would rejoice if the present were always present, or if the single moment of thought could be extended to a generation. In the absorption of study, time flies away with inconceivable speed ; the night is gone ere the task is finished ; and we sigh when nature, or more truly duty, calls us to repose.



ANCIENT EDUCATION : SILENCE AND LOQUACITY ;  
THE RESERVED HABIT OF AUTHORS, &c.

~~~~~  
Symbol II.—*Ad solem versus ne loquitor.*
Speak not in the face of the Sun.
~~~~~

1. IF we were asked what is the most distinguishing point of difference betwixt the ancients and moderns, we should reply, the conduct they pursued in the acquisition of knowledge, and cultivation of wisdom, or philosophy. The former entered the sacred temple of Minerva with the deepest reverence and soul-subduing awe ; they beheld the great goddess with those feelings of veneration and humility becoming frail feeble man, in the presence of *that* coeval with the foundations of the world ; among each other they showed the same marks of respect ; and, in their converse and teachings, forbore from any of that familiarity which we indulge, in bringing the most sacred things into contempt. Before a candidate was permitted to approach the shrine of Minerva, Pythagoras required of him proofs of worthiness to enjoy so high a favour ; and a certain ordeal was instituted whereby to test his sincerity and strength of mind ; for all were not allowed, as all were not worthy, to participate of the privileges belonging to the devotees of Wisdom. His fortitude and self-command were subjected

to the severest discipline, by a tedious trial of abstinence and rigorous exercise. Animal food was forbidden ; sensual enjoyment of any kind denied ; luxury, Tantalus-like, was placed before him only to be snatched away ; the nectar of the grape displaced for the crystal spring supplied by nature. To inure the initiatory candidate to self-denial, it is said, Pythagoras sometimes ordered a table to be served up with a profusion of delicacies sufficient to excite the desire of a stoic, and that when the moment of gratification seemed at hand, the master would order the whole to be removed. The appetite was keenly prepared by a long mortifying fast, so as to make the disappointment as bitter as could be.

The garments which the pupils wore were of the simplest kind, suitable to purity and simplicity of manners ; and corrective of all feelings of vanity or ostentation. Of sleep they were required to be exceedingly frugal ; and we may be sure their couches of repose were not of that kind to foster indolence, or soften the mind by luxurious enjoyment. They were not permitted to indulge in any thing that would tend to inflame the desires, or stimulate the passions. To teach them humility and command of temper, they were exposed for the space of three years to a continual course of contradiction and ridicule. Avarice, that paralytic passion of the human mind, enemy to virtue and foe of wisdom, was totally eradicated by submission to voluntary poverty. If they joined the society, having money or possessions, they were compelled to throw them into the common stock ; and, therefore, had to abandon all ideas of exclusive right. In order to become docile and submissive, and indirectly to shew their veneration for wisdom, the finger was placed on the lip of Horus, the Isaac

veil was not uplifted—in a word, silence was strictly enjoined ; and the secret doctrines of the school, during that long term, were studiously concealed from them. When found worthy to be ranked among disciples, they were gradually initiated into the awful esoteric truths of philosophy, which they were bound, by a solemn oath, not to divulge to the world. A woman, it is related, was once forced by a tyrant, under penalties, to disclose the secrets of the Pythagorean system ; but, rather than violate her oath, she bit off her tongue, and spat it in the tyrant's face.

The habit of reserve being thus acquired, when the pupils were afterwards admitted into the number of disciples the rule was relaxed, and they were permitted to converse freely like the rest. However, their minds were so judiciously trained, that they never again relapsed into vulgar loquacity. In the interchange of ideas they were remarkable for their reserve, and for the few but expressive words they used. In a multitude of words there is no wisdom ; many words confuse and perplex the mind ; and their object in conversing was rather to suggest a train of thought, than talk over what was already known and familiar. Their excursions into the country, sometimes singly, sometimes in parties, large or small, were designed to suggest ideas, and bring the mind to an elevated state of meditation, by a survey of the works of nature in the external world. This could not be done by perpetual loquacity,—by a rapid train of confused, and, as is often the case, worthless ideas, but by musing and reflection ; not altogether inward, but manifesting themselves in the suggestion of a novel thought, in the mutual inspiration of sublime emotions, or, at intervals, in their expression and

communication in words. Rapid and copious language is well known, to all minds so trained to silence and meditation, not to be so competent a vehicle for deep thoughts as sympathy and communion, carried on by few words, yet deeply felt and understood. The lover can convey his passion more forcibly by the eloquence of the eye, the expression of a look, or by the power of a smile, than by language.

2. There is nothing we delight in more than this Pythagorean silence; this ecstatic musing of the mind. Cicero said, there is not only an art, but an eloquence in silence. We find language only an impediment to thought. There is an effort required in speaking which fatally disenchant the soul, and brings it down to the realms of reality. In using language we care not so much about the idea, as the mode in which we express it. But the same idea unexpressed in the mind is there existing in all the nakedness and simplicity of its nature, pure and beautiful as from the Creator's hands. Words may embellish the idea in an artificial dress, but what we gain in show we lose in simplicity and symmetry.

With this preference for silence, and perpetual longing for solitude, and the solitary places, where we love to court fair wisdom, our detestation of great talkers can surprise no one : and no one of a discriminating turn can wonder at the bitterness we may express against this tribe of noxious animals. It will be found true, as Raleigh says, "that speaking much is a sign of vanity ; he that is lavish of words is a niggard in deeds." It will be found, too, that empty vessels emit the greatest sound. Great talkers are but tinkling cymbals and pieces of sounding brass. "It is," observes Pope, "with narrow-souled people, as with

narrow-necked bottles, the less they have in them, the more noise they make in pouring it out."

3. It is the fool who speaks in the face of the sun; *i. e.* makes known his thoughts and feelings to all the world. As of a woman's modesty, which, it is said, she cannot safely unmask before the moon, so is it with a man's mind; he cannot prudently or wisely disclose it even to the most intimate friend, much less to all mankind. There are secret thoughts in every breast, to know which is no man's business; and to proclaim them publicly is a certain proof of a loquacious, superficial mind, and of the want of depth of character. He who cannot bridle the tongue, and act discreetly, but is ever declaring to the world the emotions he feels, and everything that happens to him, however trifling, is sure to bring upon himself contempt and derision; as such conduct only more effectually exposes to view the meanness of his soul, and littleness of his character.

4. It is remarkable that great men have, in general, been silent and taciturn in company. "In conversation," says the author of the *Literary Character*, "the sublime Dante was taciturn or satirical; Butler sullen or caustic; Gray and Alfieri seldom talked or smiled; Descartes, whose habits had formed him for solitude and meditation, was silent; Rousseau was remarkably trite in conversation, not an idea, not a word of fancy or eloquence warmed him; Addison and Molière in society were only observers; and Dryden has very honestly told us, 'My conversation is slow and dull, my humour saturnine and reserved.' Pope is said to have said only one witty thing in his whole life. Sir Isaac Newton was silent and abstracted in company, and seemed as if he were saying his prayers. A Frenchman mentions the silence of the celebrated Franklin, who was

a shrewd observer, and not much given to abstraction. Chaucer and Fontaine were more facetious in their tales than in their conversation. Tasso's conversation was not agreeable," &c.

So much for the effect of thought and study on the organs of speech. Their course of life was truly Pythagorean; and, as might be expected, their wisdom and learning were in the ratio of their silence and reserve. If they had been ordinary men, instead of being some of the brightest characters of earth, it may have been safely predicated of them, that they would not have earned the above remarkable distinction.

## THE DESIRE OF FAME.

~~~~~  
Symbol III.—*Cerebrum ne edito.*
Eat not the brain.
 ~~~~~

1. PERHAPS on reflection there is nothing in the life of man more singular than the desire of fame after death. If it be a pleasure to have our names in the mouths of men, it is a pleasure only to be enjoyed in prospect; and this prospective pleasure is the wonder, the marvel. It is curious also, that those men who are buoyed up by this hope of immortality, are not always the most eager to desire celebrity while alive. On the contrary, temporary applause is often despised, as a worthless shadow in comparison with that real, substantial, matured praise, expected for their works in future times. It is not for the living acclamation they labour day and night, but for the post-humous fame. They consume not the brain for what can now be heard and enjoyed—the approbation of men—but for that which death shall veil from their eyes,—the smiles of unborn generations.

2. If we could enumerate the hosts of men who have aspired to fame, who have laboured, destroyed their health, and undermined their happiness for fame, and then compare with that terrible phalanx, the small band who have

been snatched from the waters of oblivion, or the still smaller band that *have* fame on account of something good or great, we should have but a melancholy prospect before us. In that smaller band of the "immortals" there are some who had, while they lived, a magnanimous consciousness of fame hereafter, but there are others who enjoy it that were careless or indifferent about it while alive. But this almost hopeless prospect of man living again in his works, has never retarded his progress nor benumbed his energies—the prospect of fame to each is too alluring; the vision, though perhaps baseless, deceives him in a pleasing dream, and fortifies him against the depression of mind, if not despair, that would follow reason and reflection. Without this stimulus, acting often in the mind that would repudiate its existence, man would fail in the great and laborious works he undertakes. What other power can sustain him in those mighty fabrics he builds up which can only be finished, if at all, at the termination of his life? What other power can spur him on, when, in old age, he is still found, step after step, ascending that steep mountain whose summit he cannot expect to reach before death takes hold of him? What other principle, but the desire of fame, could urge him on in labours almost Herculean, and with a hardihood and perseverance that never flags?

The marvel is not so much in man's labour for fame, because in fame he expects a reward for his toils. The marvel is, that the reward is one he can never personally enjoy.

3. Through works on science, literature, and philosophy, men chiefly aspire to fame; they are more enduring than any other works of man; and, as works of the mind, having a perpetual, undying influence on the opinions and



thoughts of men, they are infinitely more valuable, and are so esteemed, than any of those other works on which man has from time to time stamped his genius. The pyramids of Egypt, or the ruins of ancient cities, memorials of man's power and greatness in past times, still excite interest ; but most men would willingly exchange them for the lost books of Livy, or the addition of another historian to our catalogue ; another poet like Homer or Virgil ; another philosopher like Plato or Aristotle, to the list of great men. It is the mind of man that permanently affects us, not his power.

4. The desire for fame can only be felt by noble, magnanimous minds ; it exists only where there is indifference to the world and all its pleasures ; for the mind, making this its chief end, is oblivious of objects that amuse the minds of others. There is a singleness in its pursuit, that concentrates all the faculties of mind and body in its attainment, while the ardour and perseverance which accompany the passion, if we may so call it, deaden the mind to considerations of policy, such as health and ease. And thus the eager pursuit often is not restrained till it has injured the health, and made a wreck of the mind. It is against this intemperance that Pythagoras enjoins us to guard ; an intemperance to which we may be guilty not only in study, but even in works of benevolence, of charity, and such like.

5. The phantom called Fame, which men pursue, often eludes their grasp ; but whether success or failure attend the pursuit, the labour, the zeal, the anxiety, are equally the same. The Italian poet says,

" For not on downy plumes, nor under shade  
Of canopy reposing, Fame is won ;  
Without which, whosoe'er consumes his days,  
Leaveth such vestige of himself on earth,  
As smoke in air, or foam upon the wave."

It is for this illusory thing, for this doubtful good, they consume their brains, and waste away : it is for this they sacrifice pleasure and ease ; court labour and care ; and destroy health : for this they abandon friends, and despise all those attractions which please and captivate others. Temperance or moderation in all things is desirable, but in the acquisition of knowledge, or in the race for fame, it is seldom thought necessary to practise it. Solomon wisely said, that much study was a weariness of the flesh, and therefore to be avoided ; Pythagoras said, " Eat not the brain," by which is meant an excessive devotion to mental pursuits, that cuts us off from necessary relaxation, destroys health, and therefore happiness, and which in time induces an unsocial and solitary life ; whereby we fail in our duties to man, and may forget our duty to God. After all, mental acquisitions are only secondary to moral virtues. Of themselves they are profitless ; they are only valuable, inasmuch as they refine and exalt the moral faculties. They are, therefore, instruments merely of good, and not essentially good. It is clear, then, we may consume the brain without any substantial benefit to ourselves, or to others ; we may go on in pursuit of a phantom called knowledge, and at the end of a long life, during which every practical virtue has been sacrificed, find that instead of a Juno we only embrace a cloud.

We have said before, the desire for knowledge is a passion in some minds that overrules all others ; and, unlike other passions, seems innocent, and by comparison laudable, which perhaps makes man less scrupulous in yielding to it ; nevertheless to abandon ourselves to an intemperate enjoyment of it—to eat the brain—is not without guilt. It may become a kind of idolatry, that exacts an obedience, and a devotion, inconsistent with our loyalty to the king

of heaven. The wise man is not he who knows most; but he who does best.

“ — knowledge is as food, and needs no less  
Her temperance over appetite.”

6. Perhaps, after all, the happiest man is not he who makes the acquirement of knowledge his sole business, his only pursuit in life; but the man who, having other occupations, makes it a kind of pastime, or rational relaxation. In those hours of leisure which most men have at their command, there is no employment so pleasing, none so innocent, none so lasting, as the pursuit of wisdom. It gives a serenity to the mind to be derived from no other occupation; it is the cause of a delicacy and refinement of soul, which nothing else we know of can afford. It is a pleasure which may be enjoyed when the body demands rest (which few other pleasures can be), and, in the pleasing change, the mind finds an indescribable comfort and relief, though it may have been all day harassed with the cares and perplexities of business. It is in this way that we have courted Minerva. The hours we have spent in her service have been snatched from the world: Those hours, which some think necessary to give up to exciting pleasures, have been more agreeably passed in that kind of relaxation we believe to be as wholesome, but far more refined, far more exalted. The mind, in such temperate enjoyment, is not enfeebled; we never feel the languor of an intellectual debauch.

7. To persons who have only a limited command of time, economy of time is much to be studied. This is often overlooked in a careless, aimless course of study, in which the mind may be amused, but little instructed. To such we would offer this advice: Read little, but reflect

much : carefully train a habit of correct reasoning, by which the fallacies of writers are exposed, and by which the mind gains a knowledge of principles ; avoid all those details which perplex and confound the shallow mind, and obtain the faculty of piercing to general principles ; this is the only way accurately to acquire wisdom. Form opinions on those principles, and be not indebted to others for them. Above all things, avoid any tinge of sophistry in reasoning. A sophist can be no lover of truth. What can be proved is to him of higher importance than what is true. Lord Bacon somewhere says, " Some in their discourse desire rather commendation of wit, in being able to hold all arguments, than of judgment in discerning what is true ; as if it were a praise to know what might be said, and not what should be thought." Recollect this, that in reading there " are some books to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested." To go from book to book, as a bee sips honey from flower to flower, is a pernicious mode of reading.

" — — who reads

Incessantly, and to his reading brings not  
A spirit, a judgment equal or superior,  
Uncertain and unsettled still remains,  
Deep-versed in books, and shallow in himself,  
Crude and intoxicate, collecting toys  
As children gathering pebbles on the shore."

## THE LOVE OF TRUTH.

~~~~~  
Symbol XV.—*Lapidem in fontem jacere scelus.*

It is a crime to cast stones into the fountain.
~~~~~

1. TRUTH was so deeply venerated by the Athenians, that Euripides, the great tragic poet, having introduced this sentence into one of his plays,—“*I swore with my mouth, but not with my heart,*”—a great tumult arose among the audience while it was performing, and they would not rest satisfied till the poet had been publicly tried for corrupting the morals of his countrymen. There is a scrupulous delicacy shewn in their conduct above all praise; a strict regard and devotion for truth in her native purity highly to be extolled and imitated. They deemed that truth, like Cæsar's wife, should be beyond even the breath of suspicion.

2. The love of truth is true magnanimity; and truth, having its source in God, it must be an essential part of religion to love truth. The only way, observes Pythagoras, in which a man can approach in resemblance to God, is to do good and love truth. Plato, with his sublime ideas, called truth the veritable soul of God, as being his very essence. What, therefore, can be more inimical to the purity of his nature than falsehood, lying, and deceit? As

God is truth, truth is eternal, because God is eternal. It is to be loved for its own sake ; for, unlike most things we esteem, it possesses an intrinsic value—a beauty and brightness never tarnished by age or by wear. Without irreverence we may call it the brightest gem in the crown of God, from which all truth emanates as light from the sun. If the whole universe were swept away, and all resolved into the original elements, truth would still shine in that crown, because it is eternal, and, therefore, inexhaustible. He who loves truth, loves what is above all price. To recommend her to us, God displays her in all her attractive features ; while by man she has been likened to the next beautiful object in nature—a pure, and virtuous, and lovely woman. “ He that finds truth,” says Sydney, “ without loving her, is like a bat which, though it have eyes to discern that there is a sun, hath so evil eyes that it cannot delight in the sun.”

3. Truth is naturally so acceptable to man, so charming in herself, that to make falsehood be received, we are compelled to dress it up in the snow-white robes of truth ; as in passing base coin, it must have the impress of the good ere it will pass current. Deception, hypocrisy, and dissimulation, are, when practised, direct compliments to the power of truth ; and the common custom of passing off Truth's counterfeit for herself, is strong testimony in behalf of her intrinsic beauty and excellence.

To openly charge any man with falsehood is considered the greatest insult we can offer him ; for although men are secretly guilty of falsehood and deceit to each other, the public exposure of them is worse than death ; they are crimes so infamous and detestable as never to be forgotten, or forgiven ; they irretrievably injure the character, be-

cause they are low and base in themselves, and undermine all confidence in the person.

4. It will be perceived that the moralist, in the above symbol, does not, in his usual way, *forbid* us to throw stones into the fountain, but says decisively that it is a *crime* so to do. And who will deny it to be a crime,—a crime to cast stones into the fountain of truth ; to perturb its pellucid waters with error, with deceit or sophistry ? He who pollutes the spring-head of truth, poisons all the streams flowing from it ; so that an injury is inflicted upon all who drink from them.

5. Truth was anciently likened to a fountain or well, for reasons obvious to the traveller through the sandy desert ; the brightness of which is refreshing to the soul, as the crystal water is to the body of man. Water is by nature clear ; so is truth. Water ramifies and flows on in rivulets ; so truth leaves her purest bed, and divides into streams and branches that all may drink. The wells of travellers were sacred. We may see how they were esteemed by the Hebrews of old. Those that were dug, or formed by benefactors, were never injured or disturbed, so that for ages after they conferred their benefits on mankind : it was the interest of all to preserve them ; and he was naturally considered a monster, by God and man, who dared to destroy what was necessary to man's existence.

Here, where water flows in abundance ; here, where its scarcity is rarely felt,—it is not to be imagined we can sympathize with the almost sacred esteem it was held in, by people of countries less blest. Here there are many who never taste water, who despise, or falsely believe it to be unwholesome, and how can we convey to their minds

a tithe of that enthusiasm with which it is regarded in other less favoured countries? There water becomes a luxury beyond price—a draught more delicious than the fabled nectar of the gods. A well in a desert is the support of life; without water man must die: he has reason, therefore, to value it and consider it a sacred object. And from this we may have an idea, though a faint one, of the greatness of the crime in destroying, or polluting, what is necessary to the life of man.

6. As water is to the body, so is truth to the soul of the weary traveller of this world on his journey to the heavenly Jerusalem. He is traversing a dry and thirsty land, and without a draught of the sacred well of truth he would perish. As the wandering Arab longs for the water-brooks, and rejoices at the sight of the green herbage afar off, which indicates their approach, and drinks with simple gratitude and thankfulness; so must the Christian philosopher pant after the great fountain of truth, which, however, is only to be tasted in another life. When Christ our Lord explicitly declares, that he who drinks of Him shall never thirst again, he alludes to this deep well of truth, and directs us where it may be found.

7. Christ is, therefore, the fountain of truth as well as of salvation. He is typified by a rock from whence gush the waters of life; of which, if a man drink, he can never thirst again. His Gospel is a perpetual, exhaustless source of truth to man. Its waters are pure and limpid, because so is truth; but alas! the fountain is disturbed, for men have cast stones into the fountain. The sacred well that springs up to everlasting life, they have polluted by their errors, their evil imaginings, their human devices,—and all the host of falsehoods they have sought to propagate



for truth. They were not ashamed to poison the source of life ; they dared throw stones into the fountain of eternal truth.

8. Need we say, that in the world the utmost vigilance is required to guard against the insidious snares of falsehood. Truth is one, but falsehood is a many-headed monster. It seldom appears in all its naked deformity, for then we should easily detect it ; but, to the pure and truth-loving, it often assumes the raiment and likeness of truth, and they are deceived ; as the devil is said to put on the garb of an angel of light, the better to tempt the good and the wise. Falsehood may be detected in the whining voice, and uplifted eyes of the hypocrite ; in the smooth-tongued words of the dissembler ; in the fawning and cringing form of the adulator ; as well as in the brazen front of the shameless liar. It may be seen lurking in the hollow arguments of the sophist ; in the language and zeal of the specious declaimer ; and, to a critical eye, it is visible and manifest in the tortuous minds of all who love to sap the foundations of man's hope—of man's belief, by turning into misplaced ridicule the revelations of God, when they seem not to accord in all points with the narrow experience and feeble reason of man.

9. There are those who wage war against truth, sometimes secretly, sometimes openly : there are those who pervert truth for the sake of lucre, self-interest, and other unworthy motives ; but there is a third class who attempt what cannot be, what God will not permit, what the decrees of heaven forbid as much as the mingling of fire and water ; they try to mix truth and falsehood together—“ As impossible to mix truth and falsehood as the drops of the Gorgon's blood.”

## ON SOLITUDE.

~~~~~  
Symbol V.—*Per viam publicam ne vedas.*
Go not by the public way.
 ~~~~~

1. SOLITUDE is the parent of wisdom. After gathering stores from the great world around, from the minds of others reflected in books, or the more fleeting ideas gained by conversing one with another, we retire, like the industrious bee, to work upon the honey we have collected. It is in solitude that all great projects have been conceived; the great and abiding labours of man in science, literature, and philosophy have been perfected. It is from the solitary chamber of the student that the opinions of men originally came, though they seem to be the spontaneous productions of the many, and not of the few. The name of those is not Legion who ever think for themselves—who can form opinions—who can reason from first principles—and act upon their own self-born ideas. This is a creative faculty of the mind that can only be exercised, or developed, in solitude. Hence the great majority of men must follow, and not lead; and from this passive state in the majority arises all manner of parties and sects in religion, politics, and other subjects. In such parties there

are few, except the heads or leaders, who possess any independence of mind or of thought ; *first*, because a member of any party must, as a consequence, subject his reason to the opinions of the party, or be persuaded by them ; and, *secondly*, because an adherence in all cases (one result common, if not necessary), to the doctrines or opinions of a sect or party, implies a suspension of the reasoning faculty, inconsistent with its independent and free action. That men in general belong, or attach themselves to sects, because they are convinced after a rational manner, or by the force of truth, is contrary to all experience. Every man does so, because he is too frail to stand alone without assistance and support ; or he is born to such opinions, and therefore never disputes them ; or borrows them because his associates hold them. Every such case implies weakness in man, though in many respects a useful and necessary weakness ; for were all men to reflect for themselves, we should have few fixed principles, and we should have neither union nor energy in carrying out our principles. And this, not because reflection is an enemy to truth, but all men have not leisure nor capacity to reflect.

2. As we have said, all great projects have been conceived in solitude ; the great principles now universally held in the world, originally sprung from the fertile minds of a few patient enquiring spirits. The authority of one great mind may sway and influence the whole world ; the speculations of Plato, and more sober opinions of Aristotle, were by turns adopted by the learned ; and they have more or less affected every succeeding school of philosophy. The successful discoveries of Newton, and other great minds, have changed the whole face of science ; while Bacon, in his solitary chamber, as by talismanic power,

has made to totter and fall the great temples of philosophy reared by ancient hands. Thus, a man alone, singly, may, in a retreat from which he never emerges, agitate the minds of the human race more forcibly and violently than one country is agitated by the invasion of an enemy. And in this lies the mighty difference betwixt physical force and intellectual power; the former is great in concert, in numbers, and union, while the latter is feeble, and almost powerless.

3. The symbol directs us not to seek after, or follow wisdom, in the broad, public way, where crowds of men and confusion may distract our thoughts. Contemplation can only be indulged in profitably while in solitude. The contemplative mind, if doomed for a season to traverse the public way, called from quietude by duty to his country, or good to man, longs ever after that moment which shall transport him to solitude and lonely meditation. Even Wisdom's self, according to the divine Milton,

" Oft seeks to sweet retired solitude,  
Where, with her best nurse Contemplation,  
She plumes her feathers, and lets grow her wings."

The greatest of all pursuits—the most useful of sciences—the knowledge of ourselves—can only be followed when alone; the soul then retiring into herself, examines her weaknesses and powers, her marvellous nature, and really divine attributes; it is in solitude alone we can know what we are, and, knowing ourselves, regulate and moderate our passions and desires.

4. Let us for a moment compare the ancient and modern way of cultivating knowledge, and storing up wisdom. The result may, perhaps, prove distasteful to men of present times; but truth compels us to speak aloud.

Science and philosophy, so called, are pursued in the broad and public way, and in the eye of all the world. The love of fame has yielded to a less noble passion, or emotion. Men would rather have the applause they think due to their merits to tickle their ears while they live, than patiently await the award of future times. Not because they modestly, or diffidently, distrust the judgment that shall be passed upon their works; but their minds are puffed up with such vanity and self-approbation, that they are delighted with adulatory strains, and would rather enjoy the praise of men now, than anticipate the verdict of futurity. And self-conceit often causes them to mistake notoriety for fame. They can no more conceive than practise the self-denial which has led some noble minds to leave their works to posterity without their names; nor imitate others who have concealed themselves, as the authors, till old age has come upon them, when policy or accident caused the disclosure. In appearing in crowds, in the open and public way, they exhibit themselves, and almost *exact* the applause of spectators; so eager and strenuous are they in gaining the temporary adulation of men. They may foolishly imagine the noisy applause of the crowd to be a kind of foretaste of the more enduring and substantial fame of posterity; whereas the probability is, they shall be as much forgotten as if they had never been, to the next generation after them.

The undeniable fact, that the mind of man does not now, as in former times, produce any works, in literature or philosophy, which indicate deep thought, extensive erudition, or grand and comprehensive principles, is a proof that the publicity courted by men, or the odious loquacity grating our ears on every side, is inimical to the produc-

tion of any thing great or lasting. Many possess what is called knowledge, whilst they are wholly unacquainted with wisdom ; without which knowledge is but a bauble or plaything, fitter for thoughtless children than rational, responsible, and moral beings. Facts, no doubt, are the stepping-stones to truth, and they are so far valuable ; but of themselves they are worthless. As knowledge can be pursued and obtained almost as easily as gathering pebbles on the sea-shore, it has become common and familiar, and, therefore, more or less contemptible. We may listen to the infantine lips of children mechanically uttering truths, pronouncing doctrines, alluding lightly and familiarly to the profoundest laws of nature, and most marvellous works of God, which can hardly be comprehended by grey hairs, or encompassed without years of laborious study. We may listen to the man of the world, whose every moment of time is sacrificed to pleasure, or vanity, or some such object, equally remote from the walks of philosophy and wisdom, discoursing self-complacently on the deepest discoveries of the human mind, as if his whole life had been consumed in understanding them. We may listen, again, to the professed man of science, who, all at once, stepping into the chair of philosophy, gathers his ideas from the works and writings of others, and produces them as the offspring of a meditative and reflective mind ; and we often find that among men he passes for a learned one, who, perhaps, can do no more than cull the thoughts and facts of others, and arrange them as beads on a string. Constantly in the public way, thirsting after applause and temporary adulation, where has he leisure to contemplate, or extract wisdom from the *indigesta moles*, as honey from the budding flowers ? Loving the broad way more than

study or solitary musing, how can he be a competent teacher of philosophy? The mere echo of other minds, creating nothing himself, adding nothing, he cannot be entitled to the honourable appellation of philosopher. Knowledge to him is only the compilation of others' thoughts, or discoveries.

Can we be surprised that the shrine of philosophy, or of wisdom, should be desecrated, when men can thus enter the most sacred places of the temple, without respect or veneration? When all familiarly touch and handle what is forbidden; and when all dare to take upon them the holy office of priest?

"O Minerva! how is thy sacred temple defiled by the footsteps of unholy men! As of old, thou art no longer revered as the source of wisdom; no worship or veneration is offered to the divinity of thy birth, or dignity of thy character. In ancient times, men believed thee to spring from the head of thy almighty parent Jove, all perfect in the moment of thy marvellous birth; now men know not who thou art, or whence thine origin.

"They still profess to follow wisdom; but where shall we find thy temples, goddess of wisdom? In shady groves? By murmuring streams? In solitary places, far away from the broad and public path, or from the turbulent haunts of men? No! thy temples now are reared in the public thoroughfares of the world; and thy degraded and impious devotees have turned them into talking places, there to while away dull time, gratify their curiosity, gain popular applause, or (more impious still) yield to some fleeting fashion of the times. Even the loud and unmeaning laugh may oftentimes be heard within the precincts of thy sacred courts."

6. The loquacity of modern philosophers, and the Py-

thagorean silence, how can we contrast them? that deep, expressive silence, mark of veneration for wisdom, and respect for truth. Man's wisdom seems now valued, or measured, by the amount of words that fall from his lips. Reserve in deep things is no longer commendable amongst us; on the contrary, every man who is silent, in the Pythagorean sense, runs the risk of being despised as devoid of knowledge. Every day does he throw the pearls of wisdom before swine,—wanting the courage to be silent, or wanting the power to curb his endless loquacity. The words of a philosopher ought to be precious; but to be precious they must be few. If that fairy whose every word became a pearl, had been as loquacious as a modern philosopher, who would have stooped to pick them up?

7. When Pythagoras opened his lips, deep thought mantling on his brow, and great ideas swelling his soul, what profound attention was excited amongst his disciples? How eager every ear to catch the words falling from his lips!—not as ours are, mere empty sounds, but genuine and expressive symbols of ideas. They clearly and simply unfolded the great truths, then received, of wisdom and philosophy; and beyond this they were esteemed of no value. Those brief words were treasured up, recalled again and again, in solitary hours, and were inseparably associated with the thoughts expressed by them; as types of things and emblems assist us in understanding the objects they represent. But with us (who use language rather to mystify than make clear), if every single expression were an idea worth estimating, in one discourse we should have more than suffice for the meditation of a whole life. In one day's conversation, how many words have been uttered, yet who can recal one idea, or one thought,



worth cherishing or preserving? In sifting and winnowing the chaff, we can scarcely find one grain to reward us for our trouble. Having no precision in our language, we have none in our thoughts; in the abundance of mere inexpressive sounds we lose the idea; and often fancy we have ideas, when we grasp the mere shadows of them.

8. Proverbs are more lasting monuments of wisdom than any other. They are the real extract of knowledge brought to this state of purity, after deep reflection on men and things. The wisdom of Solomon, the wisest of men, was embodied in proverbial expressions and short sentences. The morals or symbols of Pythagoras, are all contained in a small compass, so that we may see how few words are required to clothe the profoundest thoughts of the human mind.

This reflection leads us to perceive what is knowledge and what wisdom. The one is a mere confused mass of facts floating chaotically in the mind—leaving some faint traces on the soul, but never entering beyond the surface; the other is the essence of knowledge, the pure extract or spirit, and is, therefore, most precious. It follows, that a man of weak understanding may know a great deal, though he may never have reflected once in all his life; for knowledge, in such a case, is a mere act of memory, requiring indeed industry and attention in compiling and arranging, but not necessarily any connected train of thought. It follows also, that knowledge being no more than an acquaintance with facts or acknowledged truths, it can have no moral effect on the mind; and thus we can explain how knowledge and immorality are often associated in the same person. This cannot possibly happen with wisdom, because to be wise, is to act agreeably to our proper being,

and in just accordance with virtue, religion, and moral rectitude. It is therefore folly to confound knowledge with wisdom.

The literature of antiquity is not a tythe of our own; the civilization of mankind then can hardly be compared with our's now; but we do not hesitate to say, that the ancients did not fall behind us in wisdom. Their knowledge was circumscribed; their collection of facts in nature and science limited; their adopted principles in philosophy, moral and metaphysical, in many respects absurd and incorrect, but, in spite of those disadvantages, they had as much wisdom as we. Having few and simple materials to act upon, their extract is transparent as crystal. They were not fettered by words as we are; nor were they ambitious to erect a *great* monument for posterity to stumble over, admire, but never read. They were wisely satisfied with small structures; but their beauty and proportion, and elegance, were equal to those admirable qualities in their sculpture and architecture. The memorials left in the writings of antiquity, act as a charm upon us; their beauty and exquisite taste are admired and extolled by all; but the fruit of their wisdom is to be discovered more conspicuously in the construction of their languages, and the rules laid down as guides to others, which even now are as the laws of the Medes and Persians among literary men. We may instance the work of Longinus *On the Sublime*; the *Institutes of Quintilian*; the works of Aristotle *on Poetry and Rhetoric*; and some of the writings of Horace.

9. If solitude be necessary for the nurture of wisdom, the pursuit of truth, and the acquisition of knowledge,

it has likewise a moral effect on the mind, tending to make us good as well as wise. To the contemplative, the distraction and turbulence of great cities are evils to be shunned, for they destroy that peace and calm essential to his state of mind. He will avoid the broad and public way, if he be wise; and, like the Pythagoreans of old, betake himself to some sequestered spot, there alone, to meditate on the objects of his thoughts. If he would call up religious and moral emotions, let him wander through the shady walks and silent groves of the country, where all things tend to elevate the mind and calm the soul. The song of birds and hum of bees, emblems of innocence and industry, shall not fall on his ear without profit. Fields enamelled with verdure—trees clothed with divine garments—the repose and stillness of nature in her favourite haunts, must recal the Creator of all; make him conscious of His presence, and providential care and goodness; and lead on by degrees to a long and delightful train of religious meditation. Every single object passing in review is full of wonder and mystery. How exquisite the construction of the blade of grass; or the wild flower, beautiful in its raiment, we heedlessly tread under our feet! All the glory of Solomon, in the purple of Tyre, and bedecked with the gold and silver of the East, is not to be compared, says Christ, with the lily of the field. There is yet a greater wonder, and greater mystery. Behold the glittering insects dancing in the sun-beam, organized, full of life, energy, and sensual delight! Their life goes down with the sun, and yet mark with what zest they enjoy it. Examine their beauty, fashioned in a day, and see how much there is to admire—how much to wonder at. The

very air, in a fine summer's day, is full of the creative energy of God ; nothing can more effectually indicate his beneficence, than the view of the external world in all its glory and loveliness. What workmanship in things most common and unobserved ; what skilful adaptation of one thing to another ; what harmony and beauty in all ! Nature is indeed a hallowed thing. She works unseen by human eye, as if caring more for the approbation of God, than the praises and admiration of men. And if her beauty exceed all human imitation in the dress which clothes her, in the shape different objects assume, in the exquisite construction of the vegetable world, how much more exquisite, skilful, and profound, are her works in organized life !

10. It is not without reason, then, that we are required to shun the public way ; for solitude is not only the parent of wisdom, but nurse of religion also. To the humble student it is a necessary of life—necessary to his silent avocations, as well as to his happiness. In solitude he has a satisfaction which none other can conceive ; and away from it he is fretful and wretched, as a mother separated from her children. While courting fair wisdom in his retreat, he is oblivious of the external world ; unconscious of all around ; and his soul may therefore be said to operate as free from matter as can be conceived possible in this two-fold nature. There is, besides, a charm in solitude, to a meditative mind, not to be conceived by the majority of men. What can shew this truth more than the fact, that while most men fly from its terrors, the student rushes into its embrace, as “ the best gift of the gods to man.”

Give me, O give me ! he may exclaim,—

“ The olive grove of Academe,  
Plato's retirement, where the Attic bird  
Shrills her thick-warbled notes the summer long :  
There flowery hill Hymettus, with the sound  
Of bees' industrious murmur, oft invites  
To studious musing.”

ON DEATH AND THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL:  
METEMPSYCHOSIS AND THE ANCIENT DOCTRINE  
OF EMANATION AND ABSORPTION.

~~~~~  
Symbol VII.—Non revertendum cum ad terminos perveneris.

When you are arrived at the frontiers desire not to turn back.
~~~~~

1. WHAT subject can we have more worthy to engage our highest thoughts and deepest meditations than that of Death? a subject which has, at all times, excited a kind of mysterious interest; giving scope to the noblest flights of eloquence, the sublimest strains of poetry, and the profoundest disquisitions of divines, moralists, and philosophers. And why? Because it is a question which is *personally* interesting to every one; each and all must one day have a more intimate connection with this last enemy of man; and it is this prospect which makes death a subject to agitate and engross the human mind. We would all avoid this enemy had we the power; but we know we have no power over him, and therefore look forward to his appearance as a certain, and not a probable evil. Morally certain that he will come, and that shortly, our next duty is to disarm him of his terrors by preparing for the doom that awaits us.

2. Human pride may, under all other circumstances, puff up the heart, and willingly forget the intrinsic weak-

ness and dependence of man ; but it dare not crest itself when death appears on his pale horse. At that awful moment the king and slave, rich and poor, old and young, are all equal : the proud humbles himself ; the rich despises his riches ; the ambitious man leaves the field to others ; the schemer, who was busily laying down plans for the future, for once forgets his pursuit ; and perhaps the slave and the poor man, whose bones have been ground for others' pleasures, or others' gain, having nothing to regret, feel the last mortal stroke least of all.

3. Death, being this universal and personal question, naturally excites our curiosity, and calls up our contemplations. In the prospect of our mortal dissolution there is something inexpressibly mysterious and awful. Nature has concealed this one of her profoundest wonders, under a veil which no man can lift up. Questions, reflections, and doubts are raised, which human reason cannot either satisfy or solve. How can a soul exist without a *human* body ? Whence is this soul transported after separation from its earthly tabernacle ? After what manner does it exist in its pure spiritualized state ? What can be its functions or occupations in a different state of being ? are a few of those questions we put to ourselves when reflecting on this mysterious subject. If we have any fixed idea at all, it is a very faint and indistinct one, of the nature and mode of existence of a spiritual being in a world different from our own ; where every thing we associate with the life of man, and which we esteem essential to its maintenance here on earth, can have no subsistence ; where the organs of sense, and the common and ordinary functions of nature, can be of no further use. Besides all this, the uncertainty of our destiny hereafter, whether for good or

for evil, for sorrow or joy, creates in us vague and undefinable apprehensions that increases the interest we have in death. The anticipated pains of our mere temporal death affect us more or less; the love of life implanted in us, and all the seductions of the world, the ties of kindred, and other kindly associations, make us dread the cause that shall separate us from them for ever; so that most men would rather endure the many vexations, privations, or misfortunes of life, however bitter and unbearable, than exchange them for prospective pleasures beyond the grave.

4. By religion and philosophy, death is disarmed of many of his terrors. In truth, these terrors are more imaginary than real; and he who comes to the confines of this life, and is about to travel to a far country, has no reason to be afraid. Nor, if he has a well-grounded hope of a better world, and reliance on an Almighty arm, ready to protect, and willing to save, will he desire to turn back, when he has reached the line which separates time from eternity. The true Christian ought rather to rejoice his weary pilgrimage is about to end, and that he is on the eve of changing from the wingless *aurelia* to the ethereal nature, having on him the wings of the morning, and enjoying the freedom of the sons of God. When he beholds Zion towering in the distance, bright in all its celestial glory, the dwelling-place of unutterable things, how should he rejoice! But before coming in view of the heavenly city, he must first pass through the valley and shadow of death; and it is here, amid this awful gloom, that the soul of man waxes faint with fear and tribulation; it is here he demands encouragement and support. What other support can he require than confidence in God, the pleasing recollection of a well-spent life, and a firm belief in



the immortality of the soul? To fear and tremble, is to shew want of belief and reliance on these sources of hope. "The contemplation of death," says a great philosopher, "as the wages of sin, and passage to another world, is holy and religious; but the fear of it, as a tribute due unto nature, is weak."

5. When we believe, or rather if we do believe, that death will be followed by life,—mortality by immortality,—it is surely folly to desire to cling to this world, and its doubtful pleasures. Who would not exchange misery for happiness, weariness for perpetual rest, a troubled life for one of peace, a diseased or corruptible body, for one that shall never taste corruption? Death, in this view (and it is the only rational and religious one), is no evil, but a positive good. Along with it go all our misery of mind, and diseases of the body, "Death," says Sir Thomas Browne, "is the cure of all diseases. There is no catholicon, or universal remedy, I know but this, which, though nauseous to queasy stomachs, yet to prepared appetites, is nectar, and a pleasant potion of immortality."

6. Life being the free and spontaneous gift of God, is a treasure not to be despised. To have been created out of his bountiful goodness, is an act that must excite love and gratitude. Each may exclaim, O God, why didst thou create any living creature? There was no necessity impelling. For thou art the Almighty, and necessity obeys thy will. How came I into being from nothingness, from a thing that was not?—but by thy power, impelled by goodness, which delights in creatures, however feeble, enjoying a portion of that happiness inseparable from thy nature. Here thou hast given a mortal life that ends, and to the eye and the reason appears extinct for ever; but in

truth, this death is life,—this extinction of present being only a prelude to an existence without end.

To this life we have a natural love enjoined, that we may cherish and preserve it; otherwise the ends of our creation could not be fulfilled. But experience teaches us, in many forcible lessons, how uncertain this life is. While we think we have life, it slips away; “it is like water poured out upon the earth, which is quickly sucked up, and appeareth not again.” So that in loving and clinging to life, we are taught, in the great moral lesson of death, that our souls must not be knit too closely or fondly to it. And this to excite in us the remembrance of another and better life; to stir us up to our religious duty; and to make us prepare ourselves for our departure hence. The same may be said of all the pleasures of life, our affections for friends and relations, and every tie which binds us to the world. There is no complete satisfaction in any one thing; but often misfortunes and disappointments; that we may never be allowed to relapse into forgetfulness of death, and a world hereafter. The love of the world, it is said, is at enmity with God, because it diverts us from our duties to Him—withdraws us from the end of all religion—preparation for futurity; implants in the foolish mind a stupid and deceitful reliance on the continuance of life; than which, it is manifest, nothing is farther from the purposes of God in our creation.

7. **THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL**—what a subject is this!—the most pleasing and interesting that can agitate the mind, or engross the thoughts of man! The mortal is full of all sad recollections, associated with sin, weakness, depravity, misery, and finally, with death; the immortal is the contrary of all these—eternal life and vigour,

a spiritual freedom not known in this bodily thralldom ; a capacity for pleasure and knowledge not conceived on earth ; a life of peace, flowing from the Supreme, beyond all human understanding ; of happiness without end ; of virtue and holiness, and perfection in all ; increasing the summit of our felicity. The belief in the immortality of the soul, is a consolation which soothes our minds in the most wretched situations of life. It is the foundation of the soundest philosophy, as, in a measure, it deadens us against the evils we suffer here, from having always in prospect a speedy termination to them, and a recompense hereafter. The belief buoys up the mind under all distresses ; and makes us cheerful and brave in the most trying situations to which we are exposed. On the contrary, if annihilation were in view, instead of a perpetuation of existence, melancholy and despair would ever attend upon us ; for where no glimmering of hope is found to cheer the panting bosom, our condition would indeed be most wretched.

8. To the Christian, the immortality of the soul is a doctrine inseparable from his religion. It is, indeed, the key-stone of all religion. The Christian requires no proof, therefore, of a doctrine without which his faith would be a foolish and vain absurdity. But to him it is not without use to observe the arguments, by which the doctrine may be supported and defended against infidel attacks. He shall meet in the world fools who will deny this ; as he may fall in with others, who say in their hearts that there is no God. And it is well to be prepared for such encounters, by proposing to his thoughts some such arguments as the following :—

9. Death is a word which implies no more than an ex-

tion of present life ; and where we affirm a certain man to be dead, we assert a mere fact, having no reference to the ultimate consequences. When we see a beautiful piece of machinery in motion, and then see it stop from some unseen derangement of the parts, we have an analogical case to the death of a human being. The machine to the eye remains the same, except that the moving power has ceased ; so does the body after death. And in both cases, though the moving powers fail to produce the usual result, it does not follow they should not exist.

10. In examining death as a natural law, and surveying it in connection with man's peculiar nature, with the eye of philosophy, we find in reality no extinction of being, but a mere separation of two natures, or distinct substances, mysteriously united to form the compound creature man. Indeed, if we would but grant, by way of premise, the existence of a spiritual as well as a material substance—a soul as well as a body—the rest would follow as a logical inference ; because, as we have no reason to think, but the contrary, that one particle of matter is annihilated, so what reason have we for imagining, that a spiritual nature must necessarily undergo that which matter does not ?

11. No one can rationally believe the human soul to be the product of matter, as they must do who attribute every function of man to the mere result of organization. It seems to us the shallowest of all philosophy, if we dare call it by so sacred a name ; for it suggests a cause wholly inadequate to the result, and boldly assumes what no human reason can demonstrate ; assumes what general belief and the soundest philosophy deny. If a spiritual or immaterial substance be a possibility of nature, why refuse

to admit the human soul to be immaterial, when all its peculiar functions evidently partake of a character that cannot be explained by any material hypothesis? If man can think, and imagine, and will, and reason, by a conformation of matter—the next step would be to affirm that God must also have a body; because we cannot conceive how any being can exist or act in what is called a spiritual, or immaterial state.

If we set a machine in motion by aid of some expansive vapour, and, by means of this machine, give motion to a great variety of most delicate and complex machinery, to carry out certain purposes we have in view, would we consider it rational to deny the existence of a motive power, because we did not see it; and obstinately ascribe all the beautiful and ingenious revolutions we observe, to the result of the arrangement of the various parts? When the whole machinery stopped, would we consider it rational (if we granted a moving power in the vapour) to assert that, because it had stopped, *therefore* the vapour or moving power had ceased to be? Such is the case with the man who denies the existence of a soul, or believes the whole functions of man to be caused by material organization. The soul is to the body what the vapour is to the machine. The difference between the immaterial and mechanical power is manifest in the results, and especially in the mode of action. The functions of the soul, so far from being impressed with the character of material agency, are so different, that we can hardly trace the faintest analogy between them. Besides, every one, unbiassed by the delusions of human reason or rather the perversions of common sense, is conscious there is something within him passing show; and, as nature is the guide and prompter, we

would rather rely on her verdict than upon all the vain, arrogant, sophistry of the human mind.

12. The belief in the immortality of the soul gives being to many curious speculations. It is impossible to resist all the visionary fascinations presented to us in meditating on another life, where our souls shall perform all their functions without material organization, and that in a far more perfect manner than here. It is said, indeed, we shall have bodies of some kind or another; the vile mortal body shall be transformed into a glorious body: but there is in human reason an impediment insurmountable, in ascribing to the heavenly body any of those peculiarities appertaining to the earthly. For example, what use could we have in another life of our organs of sense, where we should have nothing to feel, taste, or smell? How could we, with a material body in any way analogous to our present one, exist in a world where all that beautiful adaptation or fitness of one thing to another, of the lungs to the air, of the eye to the light, of the ear to the vibratory motion of the air, would no longer exist? The heat of one planet would scorch us; the cold in another would freeze our blood; and in both our organs would cease to play.

There are two considerations arising from these remarks. 1. Either the body must undergo such a change as to adapt it to the new mode of existence; and if the faculties and organs we now have shall still exist in connection with the body, only adapted to the new circumstances of life, it is clear we shall still be creatures of a human kind, inhabiting a world in many points resembling this; supplying our stomachs with the products, or food, presented to us; delighting our eyes with the manifesta-

tions of God's works ; and exercising all our functions and organs only in a more refined and more perfect manner than on earth. 2. Or, assuming a sublimer and more consonant idea, we may imagine that our new bodies shall have no resemblance in form, or shape, or anything else, to our mortal ones ; that all our organs and natural functions shall wholly disappear ; and that out of the material tabernacle shall arise a glorious body, bearing no analogy, or points of resemblance, to the human body.

Though of the nature of such a body we can have no idea, as it is beyond the limits of our province of thought, or even of imagination, still such a complete transformation as we have supposed appears more rational, than the popular belief of bodies existing in heaven with all the organs and members of our gross material bodies.

13. The belief in a future state has been the popular belief in every country, aspiring to the first rudiments of civilization. Every people has had some religious notions ; and religion seems to imply the existence of a belief in another world, or another life. Among the great philosophers, and learned men of ancient times, there was, as might be expected, great diversity of opinion on this interesting subject. However, it would appear the most celebrated for learning, virtue, and morality, were on the side of the popular belief. Nevertheless, their opinions and writings on this question are very vague and unsatisfactory, a circumstance that ought to excite our reverence and gratitude for the better light vouchsafed to modern times.

There is existing a *Dialogue* of Plato's, said to be a professed treatise on the immortality of the soul. The eloquence of Phædon so captivated Cleombrotus ; his ar-

guments appeared so cogent and convincing; that he actually committed suicide, the sooner to enjoy that intellectual symposium, and immortal life, described by the divine Plato. Yet I apprehend the demonstration which led to such conviction in this enthusiast (if the story be true), would hardly satisfy the worst logicians amongst us. This is Plato's argument: "Is not death the opposite of life? Certainly. And do they not give birth to each other? Certainly. What, then, is produced from life? Death. And what from death? Life. It is, then, from the dead that all things living proceed; and consequently souls exist after death."

14. "In the midst of life we are in death," is a sublime and truly philosophic expression; nearly the same idea is found in the *Gorgias* of Plato, in which he says, "Perhaps we are in reality dead; for I have heard from one of the wise, that we are now dead, and that the body is our sepulchre." Again, we discover the same idea pursued by Euripides, who asks, "Who can tell whether to live is not to die, and to die not to live?"

In those two mysterious sentences of Plato and Euripides, distinct allusion is made to a belief in the pre-existence of souls. Though we cannot subscribe to such a doctrine as this, still we may think, that, in comparison of our heavenly being, we are virtually dead; not only morally, but spiritually dead; having an incubus on our souls by connection with the denseness and lethargy of a material body; and in no degree enjoying that pure immortal being—the prerogative of our spiritual nature. Our souls have lost their natural radiance and freedom; they are imprisoned, as it were, in a cave, where all things tend to corrupt and tarnish the native brightness of the spirit.



This is, however, but for a season. The cloud that darkens the sun shall pass away, and we shall then behold him in all his glory and brilliancy. Life is that cloud ; and death shall remove it. To die is, therefore, to live ; from galling bondage we shall be emancipated by death ; and, by its friendly stroke, we shall emerge from a prison to the light of an eternal day. To die is to live for ever ; there is no other death, as Virgil beautifully remarks, but all souls shall return full of life to the stars, which make together a wonderful harmony.

——— “ *nec morti esse locum  
Sed viva volare  
Sideris in numerum.*”

15. If ancient poets and philosophers could thus, amid all their doubts and perplexities, speak confidently of another life, and of death with indifference, surely we have much greater reason, as all these doubts have been effectually dissipated by an express revelation from heaven. The immortality of the soul is no longer a question of speculative opinion, to please the arrogant intellect, or delight the imagination of man ; it is now a truth beyond dispute to the minds of the wise. Revelation has put her impress on the deductions of human reason, and thrown a light on the darkness in which the soul searched after truth. All is now clear ; the mist of ages has passed away ; the Sun of Righteousness has arisen, and lighted up the world.

True, he has not given us such a measure of light as we would desire ; he has not entered into a minute description of our mode of being in another life, or portrayed to the curious eye the glory of heaven, or feasted the imagination by a description of the nature of those pleasures we are to enjoy, or supplied us with an account

of those occupations that will engage us for all eternity. But he has given us all that we need know ; all that can be useful or profitable to us here.

Let us not despond at the veil thrown over the mysteries of eternity. A minute description might have been more perplexing to our minds ; for how can we, in this state, comprehend matters high above our comprehension ? How can human language convey an idea of those subjects our curiosity desires to know !

16. It cannot be questioned, that the great Samian philosopher, as well as Socrates, Plato, and others, whose writings and doctrines are better known, acknowledged the immortal nature of the human soul. This sublime idea he is said to have received from the Egyptian priests, and Chaldean magi. Though we can see no reason why he, or any other ancient philosopher, should have been behoven to these mystics for a doctrine that may be discovered by the light of the human understanding, we must confess that, as respects Pythagoras and his school, the doctrine partakes of all the mysticism peculiar to Egypt and Chaldea. The clearness of his own intellect was overcast by the clouds of mystery and heathen ignorance ; the simple doctrine was obscured by the wild and visionary speculations of man, collected in countries having a high reputation for wisdom and knowledge. Some of these speculations were adopted by Pythagoras, and incorporated into his system ; but whether for policy merely, or because he believed them to be true, cannot easily be said.

17. The foundation of this system rested on the belief of a soul pervading the world or universe, of which the world was the body. This mundane soul was supposed to give animation to every creature ; to be the operating

cause, if not the real creator of all things. Of it the human soul was believed to be an emanation or ray, which, being lodged in the body of man, was separated from its great parent for a period of time, again to be absorbed in the great mundane spirit at death. The greatest felicity man could enjoy, was to be at once and directly united to this soul of the world. Wretched were those who, from crimes committed in the body, were doomed to undergo all the protracted miseries of transmigration; that purgatorial probation, and purifying process, necessary to prepare them for ultimate and eternal absorption in the supreme. The bodies through which the soul passed—penalty of guilt—were supposed to bear some analogy, or likeness, to the crimes committed, or vices indulged. But it appears, besides such as were required to undergo this preparation before being received, united, and swallowed up for ever, there were others of too Ethiopian a cast ever to be cleansed from their sins, or made fit partakers of this felicity. These unhappy wanderers, wretched exiles, banished, not so much for the amount of guilt or blackness of their crimes, as for obstinacy and presumption in continuing in evil, were imagined to descend from bad to worse; to the bodies of brutes and reptiles, and of plants, till perhaps the essence of their being was destroyed or changed; so as to debar them from ever again knowing good from evil, or pain from pleasure. The fate of the good soul was a constant ascent towards the great spirit, till its final period of union; that of the evil was a perpetual separation from it, till it terminated in a complete spiritual annihilation.

18. Such were the doctrines concerning the nature of

the human soul, as held by the ancient Egyptians; but we have reason to doubt whether Pythagoras maintained them to their full extent, as there are such insuperable objections inherent in them, as must have staggered his understanding. For example, he may have perceived the doctrine of emanation and ultimate absorption to be irreconcilable with the independent existence of the soul, either here or hereafter. He may have perceived the absurdity of the Great Soul punishing the emanation (as a ray of light from the sun), being a portion of its own spirit. He may have seen the folly and impiety of ascribing evil to a fragment, or portion, of a good spirit, and other objections obvious to every one. How could the soul of man be conscious of that felicity ascribed to it after death, if it had no separate existence? How could it act an independent part on earth, implied in the very idea of reward and punishment, if it were a mere emanation of another being? These are inferences which expose the absurdity of the doctrines of emanation and absorption; and they are so manifest, that I cannot think the intellect of our philosopher could pass them by unobserved.

19. In the doctrine of transmigration was found an answer, however inadequate, to that grand question which puzzled the minds of the ancients—How are the wicked after death to be reconciled to an offended God? Such a solution of so great a problem demonstrates, how weak is the understanding without a revelation from heaven. It is, indeed, as may be expected of any great religious question agitated by pagans, no solution or answer at all. Some penalty is annexed to guilt; rewards and punishments are pointed out; but who can explain how souls

transmigrating through different bodies can become purified? No man can touch pitch without defilement; and how can the human soul be subjected to all kinds of impurities without becoming more wicked and degraded than before? The soul may be improved by exalting it, but not by debasing it; however evil, however gross, in its passions or in its desires, it cannot have its passions purified, or desires better regulated, by passing into creatures notorious for lust and impurity.

20. To conclude. All such ideas of punishment, by way of purification, imply what cannot be admitted, that the soul of man may, of itself, be rendered worthy of the bliss which awaits it; and, as by right of a good life here, claim immortal happiness hereafter. The ancient philosopher confided in his virtuous life as a title to enjoy his paradise; the humble Christian, having no such confidence, feels greater apprehensions as regards the future. But though the highest degree of virtue possible cannot entitle him to heaven, it prepares him for it, and deprives death of many of his terrors. "If your life has been holy," says Epicharmus, an ancient comic poet, "you need have no dread of death; for the spirit of the blessed shall exist for ever in heaven." Listen to this admirable passage of great antiquity, which some ascribe to Philemon, and others to Diphilus. "Thinkest thou, Niceratus, that those departed spirits, satiated with the luxuries of life, shall escape as from an oblivious God? The eye of justice is wakeful and all-seeing; and we may truly say that there are two several roads conducting to the grave, one proper to the just, the other to the unjust; for if just and unjust fare alike, and the grave covers both to all eternity—

hence! get thee hence at once! destroy, lay waste, defraud, confound at pleasure! But deceive not thyself; there is a judgment after death, which God the Lord of all things will exact, whose tremendous name is not to be uttered by my lips : and he it is who limits the appointed date of the transgressor."

## ON PREPARATION FOR DEATH.

~~~~~  
Symbol VII.—*Stragula semper convoluta habeto.*

Always keep your things ready packed up.
 ~~~~~

1. IF we believe we are here on earth only as pilgrims, travelling towards some better country, the land of promise, or as sojourners in a world of sin and misery, undergoing a kind of purgatorial probation, to render the soul fit for those mansions of perpetual rest, pictured to the weary traveller as regions of perfect happiness, where no sin can enter ; of peace, of joy, of purity, where no strife, or misery, or wickedness can dwell ; and where all our privileges shall be permanent and unchangeable, not fleeting and transitory as on earth ; and where nothing shall be left to desire ; we must think death to be a blessing, which can transport us to those happy and immortal realms. If the valley and shadow of death be gloomy, half the terrors flee away when we know that the *Civitas Dei* is not far off. In truth, who can say that at the very moment of dissolution, when the immortal leaves the mortal, the light of Zion does not burst upon the emancipated soul ? Who can say any space of time, or any distance, intervenes between the passage of the soul from earth to heaven ?

2. He who has his things always ready packed up, as if prepared for a migration to another clime, regards himself in his true light, as a mere sojourner, waiting, as it were, for the ship and the tide destined to carry him on his final voyage. He does more—he signifies the uncertainty of that moment when the King of Terrors will execute his decree. He will not impatiently hope for, or expect, the final stroke of death, but he cannot fail, if his things are packed up, to be ready when it does come. He knows that every moment passing back into eternity, accelerates his passage to another world, and brings him nearer to his everlasting resting-place. There, he is certain, that the duration which now flits before his eyes, in broken fragments of succession, shall merge and be swallowed up in the infinite expanse of motionless eternity, on whose fixed, abiding, changeless surface, past, present, and future, are known no more.

3. He is pleased to behold in the insect world types and emblems of the life of man, as if designed to convey some faint idea of those wonderful transformations man shall undergo before he arrives at his perfect state of being. Even among the ancients, heathens as they were, the analogy was not unobserved. Psyche, or the soul, was imagined as a beautiful butterfly, and sometimes as a lovely female child, having the ærial wings of that insect. It has been justly supposed, that the exquisite story of Cupid and Psyche was nothing but an allegory of the pilgrimage of the soul through this life, and its ultimate union with Divine Love.

“ The Aurelia, as an eruca or worm in its first stage,” observes the learned Bryant, “ lies for a season, as if dead, enclosed in a sort of coffin. During the winter it remains



in this state of darkness, but when spring returns it bursts its bonds, and comes out with a new life in beautiful attire."

We may yet carry the analogy further. We may behold in the worm a type of man on earth ; a creature full of sense, grovelling under the weight of passion and desire, and, in a life of mere sensual pleasure, appearing unconscious of the nobleness and dignity of his nature, and of the immortal being belonging to him. In the aurelia, we have an emblem of the body in the state of death ; in the perfect winged creature, a type of the emancipated soul ; of the resurrection, in which the mortal body has changed into a spiritual and glorious body ; and in the chrysalis a type of the earthly, carnal, mortal part, doomed to undergo corruption and decay.

4. In the very uncertainty of the moment of death, we have a great moral lesson, inculcated by our philosopher. Death is not only uncertain, but capricious. No one can confidently rely on another hour of life. However strong we may think we are—that is no security. The young and healthy we see mowed down alike with the old and diseased. The sturdy oak often falls before the delicate sappling. The most promising and beautiful flower of nature is not less insecure from the blight or withering frost, than the reed and wild-flower we heedlessly tread under our feet. O Egyptian mothers, how happy ! how secure in your happiness did you feel on that morning before the angel of death destroyed all your first-born children ! There were found not even the seeds of disease to awaken your apprehensions. The bloom of health was on the cheeks of those fair lovely things, but what security was that against remorseless death ! None. Even so now,

when we look for no avenging Deity to destroy mankind by a miraculous power, we are not more secure. At the moment when the fond parent gazes with the moistening eye of delight on her offspring, rejoicing in its health and beauty, the messenger of death may be lurking about the cradle, waiting for his final command.

Who has not seen the hovering kite intent on the slaughter of some tender brood? Who has not heard the scream of terror raised, at the sight of this deadly enemy, by the parent bird? Who has not witnessed the bird of prey destroy its victim in the moment of enjoyment and innocent pleasure? In these we have types of events in the life of man.

Death, again, assumes other forms, and attacks us in other ways. If we are uncertain of the moment he may come, we know as little how he will attack us. As the worm is found in the seed, or in the heart of fruit, slowly gnawing and corrupting, unknown and unseen, so sometimes the seed of death is discovered inwardly destroying when the outward form is perfect and beautiful. But if he is at one time slow in effecting his purpose, it is not for any want of power; for in many cases we find one single moment suffice. He who is pleased to afflict man with a lingering death, can as easily destroy by a flash of lightning, or by the terrible earthquake.

5. When for a moment we contemplate the structure of our bodies, we are surprised how we escape death for so many years. It is not the strong and vigorous parts we should expect to fail, but those extremely delicate ones, on whose perfection the life of man depends. It is not the paralysis of a muscle that can kill, but the derangement, or decay, of a nerve infinitely fine in its conformation.

The life of man (when we examine his body) appears to be a perpetual miracle : I mean, that the providential care of God is such, so constant, so vigilant, so perpetually exercised, that it amounts to miraculous, or supernatural agency. It can only excite our veneration and gratitude when we consider, that the stoppage, or disarrangement, of one single wheel in this admirable and supremely delicate machine may cause its destruction. That its welfare, and every moment of life, depend upon an infinite variety of concurring operations—upon a perfect adaptation of one part to another ; and in the uniform harmony of all.

6. No one can deny that it is the truest wisdom to keep our things ready packed up, in preparation for a journey over which we have no control. We must go hence, but we know not when the ship shall arrive to carry us away.

This vigilant readiness is rather an enemy to than a promoter of fear. He who is prepared feels few, if any, of those pangs of remorse and terror endured by the careless and the wicked. He knows, that, after all, the dread of death is most in apprehension ; that the pain is no more to him than to the meanest insect.

“ The sense of death is most in apprehension,  
And the poor beetle that we tread upon,  
In corporal sufferance finds a pang as great  
As when a giant dies.”

7. That must be a poor spirit, indeed, who can prefer the fleeting pleasures of this life to the beatitude of immortality. He who clings to life is hardly worthy of death. If premeditation on death be liberty, as says the sage Montaigne, then he who loves and clings to life, as a child to its bauble, is a veritable slave. Indifference to

life, and contempt of death, is true philosophy ; and the sure ensigns of a great, magnanimous spirit. What, indeed, is there in life that makes it so desirable ?

“ Is life a hundred years, or e'er so few,  
'Tis repetition all, and nothing new ;  
A fair, where thousands meet, but none can stay ;  
An inn, where trav'lers bait, then post away ;  
A sea, where man perpetually is tost ;  
Now plunged in business, now in trifles lost.”\*

\* Brown's Immortality of the Soul.

## ON THE VALUE OF TIME.

~~~~~

Symbol VIII.—*In meridiæ ne dormito.*
Sleep not at noon.

~~~~~

1. THE harmony and aptitude of the laws of nature, with the habits and instincts of animals, must forcibly strike every reflecting mind. The revolution of the earth on its axis gives night and day, while it is, at the same time, fulfilling other designs of the Creator ; the recurrence of night and day mark the periods of repose and activity in the animal world ; the instincts implanted in us direct to the night as the proper and natural time for sleep, and the day for work and activity. By this wise ordination no time is lost. In the darkness, when no man can work, the body sinks into sleep, on the morning to awake invigorated and refreshed for labour.

2. It is a pleasing employment to watch the advancing night on the animal world. As the sun is descending, we behold nature, in a summer's evening, teeming with life ; the air filled with the hum of activity, innumerable insects dancing in the departing rays, the winged tribes warbling their evening hymns : soon after, all is hushed in repose, as if the angel of death had passed over the world ; universal silence reigns, for all nature is subject to the great

decree. But again, on the morning, ere the sun has risen above the "misty mountain's top," we find the same scene of animation renewed, recalling the ever-watchful providence of God, his presiding care, his goodness and love; and, in the sleep and the silence of the night, instead of the angel of destruction, we have the manifestation of God's care for all his creatures.

3. Nature having pointed out the night as the proper period of rest and sleep, to pervert this wise law, and indulge our slothful and indolent habits, by sleeping at noon, or by employing the day for the purposes assigned to the night, is sinful as well as unwholesome. During the night, there are operations going on in nature necessary and beneficial to vegetation, but which render the air more or less noxious to living creatures. And in this we have another instance of the goodness of God. For while we are asleep, He is preparing the world for us; and those processes injurious to life and health are carried on when we are insensible to them, and protected from their influences.

4. To sleep at noon is not only a mark of indolence, but (as the symbol signifies) a proof of disregard for the value and importance of time, than which there is nothing more valuable, says Theophrastus, and those who misspend it are the greatest of all prodigals. By sleeping at noon, and turning day into night, we close our eyes to the beauties of the external world, and shew our indifference to things that, in a good mind, excite gratitude and admiration; we pervert the ordinances of nature, and neglect those active duties which can only be effectually done by day.

5. The value of time is disregarded by the idle and the

useless, but, by the active and industrious, it is estimated at its true worth ; by the good, time is viewed in its true light as the gift of God, for the use of which, as moral agents, they are responsible to him. All great minds are distinguished for their value of time,—that which, when gone, can never be recalled. Those who have risen to eminence, and worthily obtained the fame due to their talents, have been perhaps as much indebted for their success to industry as to their natural gifts. What we imagine to be the spontaneous offspring of genius, is often a work of much time and infinite labour. Nature may give the genius to design or conceive ; but it is only labour, and art, and industry, that can bring perfection. The facility some men have in composing, is the result of previous education, and days and nights of labour : many great works in literature, which, when they appeared, surprised the world, have been proved afterwards, in the biographies of their authors, to have been the results of many years of intense study and seclusion. We could multiply instances, were the fact not well known. When the great Demosthenes electrified all Greece, and received the applause of his countrymen, by an eloquence never reached by the greatest orators of any other age, little did they think of the labour and time spent to earn this celebrity. “ O Athenians, how have I laboured to have you talk of me ! ” was his own expressive exclamation.

6. How fleeting is time ! The nearer to the grave, the quicker it seems to pass away. How many regret its rapid flight, yet how few so wise as to use it well before it vanishes ! It cannot be recalled, and therefore, as regards the past, repentance is useless. We must snatch it before it goes, and profit by it. “ We all complain,” says Sene-

ca, "of the shortness of time, and yet have much more than we know what to do with." Because to most men all time is a burden, which is not spent in pleasure or business; to "kill time" is an object which occupies much of men's leisure; but, to the wise and useful, time often proves too short, and they would that the day were longer, and the night shorn of its proportions. To the active and industrious, time appears to fly away with eagle's wings; and the lease of life is often run out before their work is finished.

7. Pleasure is inseparable from occupation; while languor and uneasiness are wisely united to idleness: it is only the idle who feel time to be a heavy burden. Strange that what is valued and coveted by one man, should be despised by another, and often felt to be an evil! In the mere occupation of time, though it relieve us from the burden of idleness and listlessness, there is no positive virtue; the true estimate of its value must be proved by the way in which it is spent. Many spend their days on trifles, far beneath the contempt of a rational creature; but to them, though we can award the praise of industry and activity, we cannot think they are useful to themselves or to others. The reflecting mind, aware of the shortness of time, its fleeting nature, and, above all, the uncertainty of its duration, cannot trifle away what is so precious. He finds duties to perform too momentous, works to be done too important, and thoughts and meditations to occupy him of too grave a character, to tempt him to waste so valuable a gift, on the trifles and amusements which fill up the occupation of half the world.

If we but consider what we are, and what we have to do, we shall never find time too long to fulfil our duties;



and, above all, to prepare for that great change which befalls all men, when time shall be swallowed up in eternity.

8. Some animals, ominous or typical of evil, prefer the night to the day. In the vulgar idea, the evil one is supposed to go to and fro upon the earth during the stillness and darkness of the night. Darkness is considered emblematical of evil, and light of purity and innocence. Darkness is the cause of superstition ; for, to the ignorant, there is something dreadful in the stillness of the night ; that period when spirits, ghosts, and such like, are imagined to emerge from their hiding-places. Night is the time chosen for deeds of darkness ; and thus we come to associate crimes with the night. The devil himself is figured to the vulgar eye as a being of darkness ; hell is associated with the same idea ; using the same figure, we have the darkness of the grave ; the blackness of sin ; the darkness of the mind (implying ignorance) ; and to be without true religion, is called the darkness of heathenism. But, on the contrary, all that is pure, all that is good, or all that is virtuous, is compared to light, as the purest and brightest substance known to us. The innocent are clothed in snow-white garments by the imagination ; the saints in heaven are so represented ; by the Psalmist, light is even called the raiment of God. The divine Plato called light the body of God ; we imagine God to dwell in perpetual light ; we say his throne is established in eternal light. Christ (carrying out the same metaphor) is called the Sun of Righteousness ; his revelation to man the light of the Gospel.

## ON INDUSTRY.

~~~~~  
Symbol IX.—In Chœnice ne sedeto.
Sit not down on the measure.
 ~~~~~

1. THERE is deeply implanted in the human breast the same principle we admire and extol so much in the bee and ant. The end to be attained is accomplished by the same means in both,—industry, frugality, and providence. In the busy insect there is a mechanical or instinctive regularity not so obvious in the human creature ; the latter varies his means, chooses more important but not more successful instruments, and enjoys a greater degree of latitude in his actions ; so that the object in view, though alike in both, is apparently at a greater distance in the man than in the insect. The instinctive regularity in the irrational animal keeps it from the vice of avarice so common in the rational. But if man be guilty of avarice in the accumulation of wealth, he is also capable of virtue, generosity, and benevolence,—qualities not found in the bee or ant. It is curious to observe, that the possession of property in both is uniformly accompanied by the same feelings of insecurity, the same vigilance of conduct, the same anxiety and dread of robbers. The strong desire to heap up is not, therefore, a vice, as some seem to sup-

pose, but a law of nature which may be used or abused according to the weakness or strength of the mind. It was, no doubt, intended as a safeguard against poverty and dependence in old age ; or, in a higher view, as a law enabling nations to become rich and powerful,—the best bulwarks against aggressors. The collateral effects on man, in social life, are manifold and various, as, for example, investing him with the power to do good to others, less fortunate, in acts of generosity and benevolence ; in employing the labouring classes to a greater extent, thus affording a stimulus to industry and ingenuity ; and we may also say, in giving him leisure to cultivate his mind, encourage intellectual and scientific pursuits, refine the useful by the ornamental ; and, in a word, advance generally the civilization of mankind.

2. The first object of man in life is to gain a subsistence ; and this, we are told, he must do by the sweat of his brow. Labour being naturally an irksome and painful occupation, the mind constantly looks forward with hope and expectation to a period of repose, which he knows can only be obtained by laying up a store for the future. The dread of want also, as well as the pride of wealth, act as powerful stimulants to exertion. The influence of these motives is illustrated by the wants and privations to which a man will subject himself for the sake of accumulating riches. The fear of want is sometimes so great that it shall accompany a man to his grave, although his *Chœnix* may be full to overflowing ; and it is this weakness and want of reliance which brings his soul at length to experience all the misery and trembling fears of the miser.

Man in society soon discovers how important an instrument is wealth ; he perceives evidences of the power it

gives, the pleasures and luxuries it purchases, the respect it extorts, and, to place himself in the same position as others, strives to become rich. He who possesses neither ability nor rank to rise above the crowd, will be buoyed up by the magic power of that glittering metal to which every knee is bent in reverence and respect. Without knowledge, without culture of mind, without any fixed notions, by the simple possession of riches, he will find his knowledge extolled, his politeness praised, his opinions looked up to, and shall taste all the sweets of flattery and adulation.

3. The moralist and philosopher may sadly ponder over this feature of society ; the priest may declaim against it as idolatry of Mammon ; yet such is the naked truth ; and, moreover, to shew the insidious influence of the love of riches, we shall presently see the moralist, the philosopher, and even the priest, bend the knee to this idol-god. The power of riches over the mind is, therefore, almost omnipotent ; it far exceeds the power of religion or of knowledge ; all the arguments directed against it fall dull on the ear ; all declamation is but an empty sound ; and to cure an evil of such magnitude requires remedies not within the reach of men. Notwithstanding all agree in condemning the love of riches, they will affirm, in the same breath, that wealth is not necessarily a source of happiness, and confess it to be a dangerous tempter to the soul of man ; and, therefore, if this be true, we may be certain the estimation put on wealth is man's own device, and that no one is to blame but himself for the undue respect offered to it in the world. While condemning the vice, he secretly loves and pursues it. If men were really sincere in their condemnation of the sin, it would soon lose its most

revolting features. But, as casuist as well as moralist, we have no hesitation in affirming boldly, that *insincerity* is the cause of the idolatry of Mammon ; no one really believes what he writes or what he preaches against the love of riches ; a strong proof of which is, that most of the warmest declaimers against that idolization of “ the root of all evil,” are the first to fall into the snare, and, by their actions in life as men, by the emoluments they eagerly covet, the alliances they zealously court, demonstrate that they are not influenced in practice by their own doctrines. In such cases it too often happens, that the greater the saint the greater the sinner.

4. The accumulation of wealth being a kind of natural law ; or, in other words, the desire to provide against the future, to lay up against disease or old age, being a wise and prudential ordinance of our nature, we cannot but admire it and encourage its universal practice. But let no man confound this wise economy with the doings of the wretched miser ; let no one say that such a wise providence is the same passion which urges men to dishonest actions, or to the meanest designs, for the sake of gain. He who honestly earns money, and economically and wisely disposes of it, is a very different character from the lover of riches, who either loves riches for their own sake, or that he may spend them lavishly. We shall generally find the idolatry of Mammon to be joined with habits of luxury and extravagance ; and rarely shall we find any traces of that economical principle, or those well-regulated, and, therefore, moral habits, existing in the mind of him who has been taught to value his treasured stores by the labour and time bestowed in collecting them.

If there are evils inseparable from the possession of wealth worthy of exposure or condemnation by divines and moralists, in those evils there is not a tithe of the folly and wickedness of the present custom, in making money, as we do, the standard of virtue or of respectability; exalting the mere accidental possession of riches above every quality, every acquirement, every talent, estimable in human nature.

5. No one can deny that moderate riches may be a source of happiness; not the cause, but as an instrument to be wisely and temperately used. All agree that happiness is not necessarily attached to the possession of wealth, and, therefore, it is not the cause of happiness. It provides many of the comforts of life, and all its luxuries, and may raise the mind to dignity and independence; but these, and man's other advantages, obvious to every one, are often possessed and enjoyed, and yet the well-fed soul may want those necessary elements of happiness,—peace of mind and contentment. Without these man may strive after happiness in vain. From whence flow these two elements? From riches? All men deny it. From the mere luxurious enjoyment of life? Heaven wills it not. It is only religion—or more properly, the philosophy of religion—which can put them within the reach of man. [It has been said, “poverty wants some, luxury many, and avarice all things;” and, therefore, contentment is incompatible with poverty, with luxury, and with avarice; it is more likely to be found in some golden mean—in moderate possessions that keep us from want, on the one hand, and extravagance and luxury on the other. An ancient philosopher said, “he is the richest man who wants least

of the gods ;" but that was a saying better adapted to an age when poverty was honourable, than for our much altered times, when it has become a crime.

6. There are some stern decrees attached to the possession of wealth, which have been remarked and commented on by moralists of all ages. When we find men come into the world born to great possessions, who are afterwards reared up in the lap of luxury, taught to eat out of gold and silver, having, during the whole of life, no care but how to enjoy life, perpetually creating new wants, and as soon supplying them from exhaustless treasures, and at length expiring, like other lights of lesser or superior splendour, are carried to their final resting-place with all those marks of pomp and grandeur which distinguished their doings among men ; a careless observer might imagine that, as regards them, the primitive curse passed on the fertility of the soil, making it imperative on man to earn his bread by the sweat of the brow, is a mere fiction. In the literal sense of the words of Scripture, it is a fiction ; but, if the sweat of the brow be taken as a simple but most expressive metaphor for care, labour, anxiety, and subsequent weariness of the soul, we shall find the rich man not free from such evils. In truth, from being more delicate and refined, he is the more susceptible, and feels the cares of wealth and great possessions more acutely, than the poor man feels his daily drudgery. The apparent partiality to the rich, and injustice to the poor, is perhaps more than equalized in the end. Those advantages enjoyed by the former (not necessarily with happiness), are, in most cases, amply compensated to the latter by other blessings, such as peace and contentment of mind, a higher relish of all the innocent pleasures of life,

domestic happiness in a high degree, and sound sleep. The couch of the rich is not always one of down :

———" Weariness

Can snore upon the flint, when restive sloth  
Finds the down pillow hard."

This drug to the poor man is precious medicine to the rich. If sleep were to be had for gold, we should find the great squandering half their fortunes to possess it. Therefore, we may observe, that one single blessing of the poor man is of great value in the eyes of others, who have to stimulate nature, and force her by artifice to give but a small share of that kindness she so bountifully bestows on the eyelids of her favourites. Then, again, if we consider that all the real enjoyment of life depends on the health, we shall find nature here has been equally lavish to the poor. To have sound sleep and sound health, many a rich luxurious man would exchange almost all those riches for which he is so much envied by others. Is, therefore, the poor man not really as rich as he?

7. Poverty and riches are mere relative terms,—meaning by poverty not absolute want or penury, but enough to supply all the common necessities of life,—as we call a labouring man a poor man, a nobleman a rich man. A poor man (in this sense) may actually be rich with little, while the rich man or nobleman may be poor with all his apparent wealth; he may have an income equal to the support of a whole town, and yet be poor indeed. No man can be better entitled to the name of a poor man than he who lives beyond his means, however magnificent may be his income. Equally true may it be said of all whose wants are greater than the power of supplying them. The cares, the wants, the anxieties of the poor man, are all



centered in obtaining the means of subsistence for himself and family ; whereas, with the rich, that is an object never dreamt of,—so disproportioned may the income be to the purchase of the mere necessities of life,—but other wants are generated, other gaps are to be filled up, other passions to be gratified, that may prove more expensive than can be covered by the largest fortune. It is, therefore, a law or decree of nature, that the wants of man tend to increase faster than his means of supplying them.

8. Another decree is the care or anxiety annexed to the possession of wealth. If one be fortunate in laying up treasures, he shall have many a sleepless night in guarding and watching them.

“ *Crescentem sequitur cura pecuniam  
Majorumque fames. Multa petentibus  
Desunt multa.*”

All beyond what is adequate to provide the necessities of life, becomes a source of trouble and anxiety. That which we least want engrosses all our care. Our talent must be put out to interest ; to let it lie useless, would expose its intrinsic nothingness ; it must reproduce itself, and be an instrument to bring more of that which we do not want ; and so we increase our cares in proportion to the increase of our wealth. 'Twere enough to make Heraclitus laugh to see man's anxiety about that which is of no use to him, and his absolute carelessness about every thing of substantial value. Men who have accumulated treasures, and, like the merchants of Tyre, clothe themselves in scarlet and fine linen, and live luxuriously, while their merchandise is traversing the ocean in large ships, are not either of peaceful minds. And what can we say of others, who

preposterously sigh and moan because they cannot find employment for their wealth ?

9. The Pythagorean symbol, besides inculcating upon us the wise economy of laying up a provision for the future, incites also, as Plutarch interprets it, to an active and useful life. Industry is the original source of all wealth. Sloth, on the contrary, is the mother of poverty, frequently of crime, and at all times of misery. "She is a most pernicious mistress ; she smiles, soothes, seduces, and caresses, but finally destroys every one who yields to her blandishments. Though thou wert Sampson, thou wilt lose thy strength, if thou layest thy head in the lap of this Delilah. Though thou wert Ulysses, thou wilt sink to a state of brutality, if thou yield to the solicitations of this Circe. Though thou wert Hercules, thou wilt become contemptible, if thou become the slave of this Omphale."

Indolence and sloth are our most dangerous and insidious enemies. They attack us in a manner peculiar to themselves, not harshly, or violently, as to stimulate to defence and vigilance, but softly and tenderly, lulling our souls as an opiate lulls the nerves of the body. The slothful man sleeps away his life, and at the call of death wakes suddenly from his lethargic dream : a rapid survey of the past convinces him that he might as well have never been.

Indolence so soothes and flatters us with its blandishments, that, at lucid intervals, we feel like one under a magic spell, or as if we had drank from Circe's potion, that turned men into swine ; and it is only by a *moral* effort that we can disenchant ourselves from the fatal dream. Its power increases upon us ; our bondage becomes more secure every inch of ground we yield, till at

length we find both passions and virtues destroyed. "It is a mistake," says a great master of human nature, "to imagine that only the violent passions, as ambition and love, can triumph over the rest. Idleness, languid as she is, often masters them all; she, indeed, influences all our designs and actions, and insensibly consumes and destroys both passions and virtues."

10. It is not without design, that pleasure accompanies the occupation of the mind, and health the exercise of the body; in this, nature clearly points out our duty. But to an active life we have a higher call than the voice of nature. Moral duties force upon us a course of action useful to ourselves, as well as to others; while religion demands a strict and accurate account of our time here on earth. Sloth and the Christian life are deadly enemies to each other. Most of the moral laws of Moses are of a negative kind, restraining us from the commission of crimes, but not declaring specifically or imperatively what duties we should perform. Of a far higher nature are the duties inculcated upon every Christian: he must not only refrain from sin, but be active and zealous in doing good.

To be idle and slothful, therefore, in a world like ours, where there is so much to exercise our thoughts, such a field for an active and useful life, so much scope for doing good, in acts of benevolence, charity, and general improvement of the species; and, lastly, in a world where Christianity is the religion, and Christ's morals the rule of action, must be highly criminal.

## ON TRIFLING.

~~~~~  
Symbol X.—*Capillorum et unguum tuorum præsegmina conspuito.*
Spit upon the parings of your nails, and the clippings of your hair.
~~~~~

1. IN the history of the world, the cup of superstition has been often filled to the brim ; and men have been found steeped up to the lips in its pernicious and poisonous waters. In the common, and, be it said, contemptible acts of paring the nails and clipping the hair, has it been mixed up : “ Piaculous it was unto the Romans,” observes the learned Sir Thomas Browne, “ to pare their nails upon the *nundinæ*, observed every ninth day : and was also feared by others in certain days of the week, according to that of Ausonius :—*Ungues Mercurio, barbam Jove, cypride crines* ; —and was one part of the wickedness that filled up the measure of Manasses, when it is delivered that he observed times.” \*

But, notwithstanding all the denunciations of God and his prophets, we still find the superstitious reverence of times and seasons practised by mankind. Nothing has so much influence over the shallow and vulgar mind, as

\* *Vulgar Errors*, vol. iii. p. 167.

observances of this nature ; because, the basis of superstition being fear, the abject mind apprehends some dire calamity from a breach of such observances.

2. But we must not infer from the literal expression of the symbol, that Pythagoras himself fell into this error ; we must search for a deeper meaning than the literal words convey ; one of a moral and practical, rather than a religious or speculative kind ; so as in a manner to harmonize with those other practical lessons of morals and conduct we have attempted to elucidate and enforce.

3. If we regard man in the light of a moral and rational creature ; or, in the still more expanded view of a religious and responsible being, created for wise designs, to fulfil infallible decrees, and to accomplish the end for which God created him, it is clear that those actions only, those thoughts and pursuits alone, can be worthy of him, which are consistent with the elevated station he holds among created things ; or, in a word, which are consistent with a reasonable being, or rational intelligence. Impressed with his high calling—his superior nature—his more excellent attributes, in comparison with mere animal natures ; impressed with the lofty idea of that immortality appertaining to his spiritual being ; of his dependence on, and responsibility to, God, as a Being of his religious veneration ; as the judge, the rewarder, and punisher of deeds “ done in the body,” how does it become him to act as a creature without forethought or reason ; to trifle away his time on frivolous objects ; to amuse himself with occupations beneath contempt, and act as if there was nothing in heaven, or on earth, worth a moment’s thought ?

It is on trifling, common, or contemptible actions, that Pythagoras requires us to shew our detestation in the

symbol,—“ Spit upon the parings of your nails, and the clippings of your hair.”

4. In passing through life, or in mixing with mankind, how many do we find indifferent to every thing but the pleasure of the moment ! How many who, day after day, pass through the same dull routine of listless occupation ! How many, who make it their toil to find amusement and empty trifles, to beguile the languid moment that oppresses them ! How many who act without reason, without reflection, and who live on, as if there were neither a God above to fill the mind, nor a world hereafter to engage the thoughts ! Thousands are there, who, having the means and opportunities of improving and elevating their minds, by worthy pursuits, and by occupations befitting a rational creature, reject them for other objects beneath consideration. Thousands are there who might die honoured and respected ; who might have conferred benefits on mankind ; and gained the gratitude and applause of unborn generations ; but they have preferred the shadows to the substance ; trifles to laudable employment ; and when gone, they are clean forgotten, and

“ The space quite closes up through which they passed.”

5. It may be said of the brute creature, that its eye is directed towards the earth, from which it obtains nutriment, while it is the prerogative of man alone to survey the canopy of heaven, and all the revealed glories of suns and stars. But among men invested with this distinguished prerogative, we have found many, who, as regards the operations of the mind, are as low and grovelling as the brute, with its leaden eye upon the ground. If they have the capacity within them of reflecting, it is never developed.

All their thoughts, or more properly their perceptions, are of the meanest kind : their minds so narrow and contracted, that neither a noble nor an elevated idea can have place there. Without vice, they have no virtue ; with intelligence, they are devoid of reason. The light, in broken rays, enters and illumines the narrow circle of the mind, but in that its work is done. All those infinite operations of the spiritual nature, that proceed in the mind of a philosopher, are unknown to them : those self-subduing, but yet soul-elevating processes of the understanding, which endow a man with the knowledge and faculties of a god, cannot exist where nature lies in her original informal state. What difference betwixt the thinking being and the cultivated soul, and the mind which possesses no deeper power, or exercises no higher faculty than the mere assemblage of perceptions, and the consciousness of emotion ! As great a difference as between the most simple and the most complicated machine.

6. He who spends his life in ignoble pursuits ; who has never once elevated his thoughts above the ordinary occupations of life, and dies at last as if he had never been ; uselessly to himself and others ; leaves earth without having tasted of those sublime pleasures flowing from an active and well-cultivated mind, and from the contemplation of the infinite wonders that surround us in nature ; or of all those manifold objects of taste, refinement, and intellectual pleasure, which throw a gleam of celestial brightness over the darkness of the world. The thoughts of the mind, independently of outward things, are, in themselves, a source of perpetual enjoyment—enjoyment that may be multiplied and diversified without end ; but which cannot be felt or appreciated by him, who centers all his life in

sensual pleasure, trifling pursuits, and mean thoughts ; and who despises every thing that subserves not those ignoble and despicable ends.

7. Let us keep this character in our eye (which belongs to the great majority of men), while we proceed to enumerate briefly some of those objects of thought and contemplation which open up to the mind of man, but of which the *trifler* never participates. He has within him a ray of intelligence, but he will not spread it out to comprehend the wonderful and soul-inspiring things that are seen on every side, which become objects of thought and meditation to the contemplative mind. The ray of divinity placed in his soul by God at his creation, has become dim and obscured through degrading pursuits and unworthy occupations.

8. Briefly enumerate the wonders of creative wisdom that are infinite ! If we ascend to heaven, to the expanse of space, and mark the twinkling stars, the soft-beaming moon, goddess of night, or the super-resplendent god of day, or the eccentric comet, as if relieved from nature's laws ; or think of the idea of space infinite, of time eternal, of worlds never yet seen by human eye, of the magnitude and distances of those suns and planets, known and registered in man's category ; we are overwhelmed by the majesty of nature, and the grandeur of our thoughts ; and we are subdued with the nothingness of man, when reflecting on the primary original Cause to whom they owe their being. But if we descend into the meaner parts of nature, the earth and its contents, we find as much to wonder at and admire. Nay, who dare deny that greater wisdom (if God's wisdom can be measured by degrees) is displayed in the fabrication of a living creature, than in all



the glories of the planetary sphere. The greatest wonder of all is man himself; wonderful in the construction of his body, more wonderful in the constitution of his mind.

How full is the world with the glory of the Creator! The beauty and perfection of his works, known only fully to those who make them their study and delight, are sources of endless and pleasing meditation. The Origin of all, in relation to his works in the external world, is surely an exhaustless theme of contemplation. And in relation to Man himself, the subject becomes more interesting as it is more personal. His thoughts retire upon himself, and his own mysterious nature then becomes the object of reflection. He is led to regard himself as a thing different—nobler—than all he has yet seen in the world beyond; as a being in close communion with an Infinite Intelligence, from whom he sprung; as a moral agent, capable of fulfilling the laws of a wise and good Being; as one in whose welfare, whose ultimate felicity, that Being has displayed an interest and concern which proves the value of his immortal soul. This immortal nature of the soul itself is a subject of surpassing interest to the contemplative mind, not only from being personal to man, but from the variety of thoughts and conjectures to which it gives origin.

If we but consider our true state, we shall be satisfied that the ends or the designs of God, in our creation, are great and important; and, therefore, our business on earth must be of the highest consequence to every one of us. Surely, therefore, if God has displayed such undoubted marks of interest in our happiness; if he has thereby shewn the estimation in which he regards the work of his own hands; if we are satisfied that we are here for certain great pur-

poses, partly developed, partly unknown, but yet worthy of the consideration of the wisest of beings, it becomes us not to act as if death were the end of our existence, pleasure the end of our being, and the manifold trifles which amuse the weak, vulgar mind, the only things worth our care and attention.

9. If we are rational beings, let us act reasonably ; if moral beings, let us display it in our conduct ; if responsible beings, let us act as becomes a position so grave and so full of deep reflection ; if we believe we have immortal souls, let us shew that we are worthy of such high gifts ; and in all things let us fulfil the manifest end of our creation. If we find men who have never once reflected on any one single object among those we have cursorily mentioned, let us lament their stupidity, but not imitate their example. Let our chief pursuits be of an elevating kind, cultivating the taste, ennobling the thoughts, and refining all our pleasures. Of all other pursuits, the pursuit of knowledge will most effectually bring about these results. If it fail, the fault is in ourselves ; if it fail in making us love the good and the beautiful, the fault is still in ourselves ; if it end in infidelity instead of true religion, the cause is in not drinking copiously enough from the crystal stream.

All things in heaven and earth are lighted up by the lamp of knowledge ; by knowledge we honour God, as being better able to appreciate the excellency and perfection of all his works, and indirectly to become impressed with his boundless goodness.

And we may confidently say with Owen Felton, if we die to-morrow our life will be somewhat the sweeter to-day for knowledge.

ON EARLY RISING: A VISION OF DISEMBODIED  
SPIRITS; AND A RHAPSODY.

---

**Symbol XI.**—*Gallum nutrito, nec sacrificato ; lunæ enim et soli sacer est.*

*Feed the cock, but sacrifice him not ; for he is sacred to the sun,  
and to the moon.*

---

1. AMONG the very last words of Socrates were these:—  
“Crito, we owe a cock to Esculapius: discharge this debt for me, and do not neglect it.” A request which has baffled the curiosity of many an erudite antiquarian. Olimpiodorus says, that by such a sacrifice he shewed a desire to heal the diseases contracted in this mortal state, so as his soul might be fitted for immediate absorption in the universal spirit, and thereby avoid the pains and penalties of transmigration. And other philosophers have proposed other solutions equally fanciful and equally absurd.\* The simple truth is, the cock was sacred to the god of medi-

\* If the curious reader will refer to Plutarch's *Life of Pyrrhus*, he shall find the following:—“It was believed of Pyrrhus, that he cured the swelling of the spleen by sacrificing a *white cock*, and with his right foot gently pressing the part affected, the patients lying on their backs for that purpose.”

\* \* \* \* \*

“It is also said that the great toe of that foot had a divine virtue in it; for, after his death, when the rest of his body was consumed, that toe was found entire and untouched by the flame.”

cine, as well as to the sun and moon ; because it was emblematic of health and long life, as it is still an emblem of industry and early rising ; calling up indolent, luxurious man from his easy couch, and hailing, with a joyful spirit, the rising sun, which brings light and gladness to the world, and expels the damps, the obscurity, and may be, the spirits of night.

“ And yonder shines Aurora’s harbinger ;  
At whose approach, ghosts wandering here and there  
Troop home to churchyards : damned spirits all,  
That in crossways and floods have burial,  
Already to their wormy beds are gone.”

It has in all times been regarded as the herald of the morning ; and from those habits peculiar to it, became sacred in the same way as the hawk of Egypt, dedicated to Horus, which flies towards the sun undazzled by the brightness of his beams. “ The cock,” says Dacier, “ has always been the emblem of those that are vigilant for our good ; that exert and awaken us to perform our duties.” Its domestic and familiar habits also tended to increase the interest of man in its behalf. And perhaps, also, its cheerful note was regarded as a sort of morning hymn, or song of praise to God, who, day by day, sends the sun to enlighten the world, and inspire us with confidence in his unceasing care.

The lark, sweet songster of the morning, gifted with similar instincts, has afforded a fertile theme for the muse ; and in those beautiful lines from Fletcher’s *Purple Island*, it is described as rising towards heaven to chant its Maker’s praise.

“ The cheerful lark, mounting from early bed,  
With sweet salutes awakes the drowsy light ;  
The earth she left, and up to heaven is fled ;  
There chants her Maker’s praise out of sight.”

And on the same interesting bird we find these verses in Chaucer's *Knights' Tale*,—

“ The merry lark, messenger of the day,  
Salewith in her song the morning grey ;  
And fiery Phœbus riseth up so bright,  
That all the Orient laughteth at the sight.”

It may be observed that all the notes of praise (if they may be so called) of those animals which seem to proclaim the goodness of God, are eminently cheerful. We make this remark, because we are convinced the effect of true religion on the soul is of a happy, cheerful, and hopeful, and not, as some lead us to believe, both in words and in practice, of a melancholy and desponding kind.

2. The habit of early rising is one that ought to be cultivated. It is the source of health as well as of wealth ; and all who have resolution to practise it are full of its praises. There are beauties peculiar to the morning which one cannot imagine without seeing them ; there is a hilarity and cheerfulness in all nature soothing to the spirit of man ; while the happiness enjoyed by the lower animals cannot but have a sympathetic influence. Nature, in a manner, points out the course of life most conducive to our happiness and long life. The morning is emblematic of youth, cheerfulness, and health ; the day of robust, active manhood ; the evening or twilight of the decline or autumn of life ; and night of death and the grave. And shame is it to man to be, as Milton says,

“ Sleeping, or  
Concocting, the surfeits of an irregular feast,”

when all nature is awake ; the loveliness of the earth awaiting his admiration ; the merry birds singing ; and every thing conspiring to add to human happiness.

3. But although we advocate early rising, and are favourable to the practice as promoting health, and bringing in its train those many blessings health gives life to, we have not found it compatible with the peculiar state of mind necessary in the composition of these Essays. It is favourable to meditation of a certain kind, as on the goodness of the Creator displayed every where; on the beauty of his creation; and all the pleasurable and evanescent themes arising from the innumerable objects that meet the eye; but not to the study of philosophy. In truth, in early morning there is too much to attract the senses; the very buzz of life we find inimical to that perfect solitude and calm essential to our progress. It is only in the deep stillness of the night, when the world is hushed in sleep, that our mind can prepare itself, and assume the spirit which is required to accomplish the great task we have undertaken. In this task all our energies are concentrated for the time being, and we cannot bear any object to disturb the train of thought. The essence of deep thought consists in the mind concentrating its faculties to one point; and then by an internal action reviewing the idea as carefully as a naturalist examines, with his outward eye, any object of nature. To this abstracted state of being outward things are inimical, as may well be imagined. In truth, all external objects vanish from the eyes; the mind is unconscious of every thing around; even the progress of time is least noted in the train of thought; and the dawn of morning,—

——“The opening eyelids of the morn,”

has often taken us by surprise.

Let any one, in the silence of midnight, under the open canopy of heaven, gaze up into the starry firmament; and

then rise with the lark on a spring morning, and he will gain a better idea of the different states of mind which we have alluded to, than any we can convey by words. The thoughts inspired by night are grand, elevating, solemn, profound; those of the morning are light, cheerful, evanescent.

4. To convey a faint idea of that state of ecstasy, or abstraction, to which the soul may be brought in midnight contemplations, we may here describe some of the singular ideas that passed through the mind, while meditating on the nature of the soul, in its incorporeal or disembodied state. The effort was mighty; the result disappointment. In the loftiest flights of the spirit of man, matter, or the associations of matter, still accompany them. In the mightiest effort to throw off the "mortal nature," body still remains to clog the divine action of the pure spirit; and although the body be thin as air, it is yet still and nothing but matter.

5. "Spirits intellectual! the night is far spent, but your lamps are still burning. Those for whom you labour are asleep, and why thus rack the brain for thankless man? Come, put out your flickering lamps, and let us commune together. Let us spiritualize our souls, if we cannot disembody them. A symposium of naked spirits is an event not to be expected on earth; but let us make as near an approach to it as we can."

At this moment a strange sensation came over me; a cold tremor vibrated through the nerves, and, when it seemed to reach the brain, I fell to the ground and fainted away. Those painful sensations ceased; they were followed by a simple sense of being, and an elastic buoyancy beyond all description. The senses ceased to act; the feeling of contact no longer existed; nothing was visible

(if I may so say) but light, or a halo resembling light ; I could no longer see in myself any shape, or form, or substance.

The ideas passing in the mind at this extraordinary transformation, were clear and wonderfully rapid. I was not conscious of being a spirit (as distinct from body), but I was distinctly conscious of existence as a being or person. A thought, or even an idea, of a certain kind, was conjured up, and all at once another stood by me (to use the language of men), or rather another was present to me, as something that was no part of me. A second effort of thought, hardly stronger than a wish, brought up, as if by magic, all those intellectual spirits with whom I had had imaginary communings,—blessed spirits that devoted themselves for the good of man, without fee or reward. They were not present to me either as gleams of light, or pyramids of fire, but more resembling sheets of transparent light, on whose surface there seemed to be a perpetual moving or dancing of luminous points, which gleamed as they appeared and disappeared. The best idea I can convey of this remarkable phenomenon, is the moon seen through a powerful telescope ; only with this difference, that the surface of the moon is calm and quiescent, while that of the sheet of light was perpetually varying, and often waving or undulating. Each distinct sheet or spirit (for they proved to be disembodied souls) seemed to possess an inherent power of expanding and contracting at will ; not in a physical manner, but as a shadow is seen upon a wall ; the line of definition, or of demarcation, belonging to each, was not perceptible, beyond a faint shadowy outline, that was rather imagined than visible ; as, for example, in a cloud of vapour, who can certify to



the line that bounds it ? The spirit that stood by me—a glorious angel of light—a Mentor—a blessed being, surely not of earth, but from the skies—declared all these things, and in a moment made the amazing mystery clear.

As I have said, those sheets of bright transparent light (bounded, and yet not bounded—limited now—infinite in a second) were spirits, or the disembodied souls of men ; the varying Protean points, thoughts, or ideas.

6. The spirit, who perceived my amazement and perplexity at this unutterable scene (a scene I had often sighed for hopelessly), underwent a rapid change, and I became agitated at the sight (for human terms cannot be avoided.) This change or agitation, I perceived, instantly, to be caused by the communication of knowledge, which I shall convey to the reader in the following manner, as the only way to make it comprehensible to him.

(1.) “ That,” said the spirit of glory and light—“ is an historian of more industry than wisdom. His life has been spent in compiling a history of the follies of mankind. It was a mighty task for any one man to undertake ; a foolish task, because no one man could finish it were his life extended ten-fold. The follies of men are as numberless as their sins, which are said to exceed the sands of the sea.” I became then conscious to the presence of this being, and perceived his form to be a long attenuated semi-transparent sheet of light, covered with singular marks, greatly varied, but very obscure, which seemed to traverse the surface as in a chronological series of events. A degree of repose existed on it, not apparent in any of the other spirits around me.

(2.) “ That,” continued the spirit, after a brief interval, “ in whose soul you see sparkling those large bright

spots, is an astronomer. They are not so numerous as in others, but behold their exquisite beauty and magnitude ! Watch him for a moment, and you will perceive a remarkable change happen to him." In a second, an infinite number of small points became visible, slightly coloured, and of a different configuration from any I had yet seen, while the large spots, first seen, remained almost stationary. He had just then discovered a new star or planet ; and those radiant flickering points were pleasurable ideas, brought into being by the great discovery.

(3.) " What are those bright, changeable, gleaming flashes of light ?" " These," replied our Mentor, " are the ideas and fancies of a poet. Behold the surface of the soul, how varied it is ; dark sometimes as a magician's mantle, and now brilliant as a summer's sky. Those strange fluctuations indicate the operations of a wild and disordered imagination. The subject occupying his thoughts is a poem of the epic kind. The machinery is supernatural ; the persons engaged in it neither of heaven nor of earth. The poet is ambitious of novelty and originality ; but in stepping from the affairs of earth, he falls into errors and confusion that shall bring ridicule upon his work."

(4.) Now became present to me the soul of a Natural Historian, or Lover of Natural History. It was covered with an infinite number of sparkling stars, some of which disappeared, and were supplied by others, varying in form. The surface, or more properly that apparent light comprehended by an invisible circumference, or circumference extended outwardly as the desire of defining it increased, was of greater expansion than any that had yet appeared, and seemed to tend towards a circular form. This form,

however, broken and imperfect, was, as I was informed, indicative of the circles in which the plans, or schemes, of nature are drawn out ; for it is found that animals are formed in kind of circles, in which the last of one has a resemblance in certain peculiarities to the first of another.

(5.) “ Behold the grave moralist : patriot, philanthropist, all in one ! How different from all the rest ! There is no agitation of passion—no dark shades of imagination—no sudden and violent changes. All is calm and placid as a lake. See how the tender emotions gradually extend along the surface ! ” Those spots of light, of a golden colour, moved slowly around each other, and were observed to expand, and then be infused into each other, till one great universal idea or emotion filled up, and shed glory over all.

(6.) “ That soul steeped in murky twilight is the Earthgropper. Dark spots are visible there, but few gleams of light. His pleasure and occupation is the study of stones, rocks, shells, skeletons of defunct animals, and such like ; not as leading the soul towards God-reverence ; or elevating it to heavenly praise ; or subduing it to humbleness and devotion ; but as a science only, or branch of knowledge reputable among men ; which he pursues for its own sake, or man’s sake, and not for the honour of the Most High.”

7. This scene having passed away, by a slight inward agitation, the whole universe came before me, as in one great idea. What was dark and unknown before became clear and certain. I could perceive the springs of motion in the innumerable worlds moving in space, and all the grand machinery instrumental to the purposes and designs of the Almighty Power.

Those limits which bound man's reason while in the body faded away, and I was no longer conscious to the want of knowledge, or want of power to satisfy the curiosity. The only things that baffled all my enquiries was God, and the spirit of created, intelligent beings. These are mysteries beyond unsolving. They are inscrutable to the mind of man, for that mind is constituted for an earthly existence.

PROPRIETY OF TIMES AND SEASONS: THE EFFECT  
OF THE BODY ON THE INTELLECT: LITERARY  
PURSUITS.

~~~~~  
Symbol XX.—*Ex curru ne comedito.*
Eat not in the chariot.
~~~~~

1. It is observed by Dacier, that “ the Greek word here used, *Διφρος*, signifies not only a chariot, but a seat or chair; and that, therefore, when Pythagoras forbids us to eat in our seats, he forbids us to eat sitting, that is to say, without working.” But, with all deference to this writer, I am disposed to think the meaning of the symbol is an injunction against gratifying our desires, or appetites, on occasions when we are engaged with more important duties; for in morals, propriety, decorum, and seemliness, are not to be overlooked. Cleanliness is truly said to be next to godliness; so fitness and propriety of conduct in all things, have the same relation to morals. There is a suitable time for every thing, as Solomon has observed. There is a time for eating, and a time for abstaining; and whilst riding in the chariot (in reference to war), or sitting on the judgment-seat (in reference to civil affairs), it is out of place to indulge in any act which shall distract our attention in the one case, or derogate from our dignity in the other.

2. If we did not know from experience, that those symbols were symbols, and not precepts or injunctions, to be received in the literal and obvious sense of the words, we might imagine, that herein the great moralist alluded to the practice of his school, in eating in private, and avoiding any ostentation. It is true, they ate among themselves, but there was no conviviality at their repasts ; for loquacity was avoided ; social feelings forbidden ; as tending to elevate a brutal, but necessary act, into one of importance. In fact, among the Pythagoreans, this act of carnal enjoyment, now so much indulged in by the priest and layman, with great show, expense, and prodigality, was so contemned, as a mere animal propensity, which corrupts the soul, and detracts from the dignity of man, considered as a moral and rational being, and religious withal, that, if absolute necessity did not overrule the actions of men, they would have abandoned the practice altogether. The next best step, they conceived, was to despise it, and to fulfil the nauseous office secretly, as if they were ashamed at what they did. O that we had a part of this magnanimity ! this self-denial, this more than human philosophy ! If the reasons are ridiculous, the virtues brought out by the practice are worthy of all times : self-denial is a virtue, that is the parent of many others—a virtue required by the Christian, surely, as much as by the pagan.

3. We might with propriety here observe, that in man the carnal and spiritual are at perpetual enmity. The gratification of our appetites is done to the detriment of our mental faculties. Intemperance in eating, and deep clear thinking, are as the antipodes asunder. “ A great eater and great soul are not found together,” says the sage Simon Trigentius, in his great book on Gastronomy.

What stupifies the body, deadens the mind. The soaring imagination, like the eagle shot in its flight, falls to the ground ; the acute crystal intellect which reasons and ponders with a majesty divine, is obscured ; those other faculties of a lighter kind, which partake of the grace of the Muses, in whose exercise we discover the scintillations of wit, the playful vein of humour, the pathos of deep-feeling, or the eloquence of passion, become incorporated and amalgamated with earth and matter. True, that eating is an act necessary : we deny it not ; we admit that man must eat to live ; but true also is it, that it is purely the act of the animal, of the brute ; and as we indulge in it, so in proportion must we descend to the gross earth, of which all animals in common are partakers. When we know that we are spiritual in degree, and that the degree to which we can ascend or descend, depends upon temperance or intemperance in animal enjoyment, the man who is guilty of the latter, whether publicly or privately, proves that he loves the animal before the spiritual nature, prefers the brute to the god.

Now, if we consider how little nature requires for the sustenance of the body, and how much man, in his sensuality, in his worship of the belly, expends in its gratification, we may conjecture to what a lofty degree the soul may be exalted in purity and brightness. All beyond what nature requires, becomes a clog upon the divinity of man. And in this we have to consider the quality as well as the quantity we eat. For man is like other animals ; he is pure or foul ; clean or unclean, according to the diet he takes. If the body—that root and abiding place of sense and animalism, and corruption—be rendered more or less pure by the substance of which we eat, can we ex-

pect the soul, that fountain of things above sense, image of God, therefore divine in origin, and glorious in essential properties, to pass unscathed through the same ordeal ?

4. Those who make wisdom their study, and especially such as give their days and nights to literature, find it necessary to attend to and regulate the quantity of food they take. In refined pursuits of this kind, the effect of immoderation is instantly felt. They must not be moderate, but comparatively abstemious ; for what would be considered moderate to a man, not so employed, shall be felt to obscure his intellect, who has to depend on the faculties of the mind. Literary labours are retarded, instead of being facilitated by excitement of any kind ; and he who undertakes them must even be more temperate in what he drinks than in what he eats. There are said to be exceptions to this rule in the composition of poetry, the drama, and other works of imagination, in which the fancy, when it flags, requires to be stimulated by artificial means. Though this may be practised in some degree, we have serious doubts whether it be necessary or wholesome ; if the genius flow not naturally, we are sure the product of excitement must be a bastard thing, and no legitimate offspring. The imagination, excited artificially, is always more or less distorted ; and the work it is engaged upon shall most certainly partake of that character.

It is well known by those who undertake works of great patience and great labour, that the efforts of the mind and body are longer sustained when there is no excitement. Stimulants give a temporary impulse, but the reaction is soon felt, and fatigue and lassitude ensue ; besides, the work is not likely to be so well done, when



neither the body nor the mind are at ease. In works of literature, when the soul is weaving her own web, and in a high state of action, there is excitement enough ; nay, there is often too much, as authors experience, who are sometimes so wrought up by their subject, as to tremble with nervous excitement, and, in consequence, are compelled to lay down the pen.

Those who have no taste for literary composition, can have little conception of the effects of the mind on the body when so employed, whether on the blood, the animal spirits, or nervous system, we cannot say. Though the body be comparatively at rest, it develops all the signs of violent exercise ; the perspiration flows as freely as if it had undergone some great physical effort. To prove that the result is no mere mechanical action, we shall find that no such effect follows upon the mere act of writing, as, for example, in copying or transcribing. Nor do we assume it happens in all cases, for we have noticed it only in those works that for the time deeply interested the mind, and engrossed all its faculties. This effect can only take place in spontaneous composition, when, as we have said, the mind is in a violent state of action.

Another marvel in writing or composing, more properly, is the speed with which time flies away : the day is gone, and the night overtakes us, when the labour of the day seems only begun. This rapid passage of time is a theme of perpetual regret to the student. He who most values time, to him it appears of shorter duration than to others. The sustained activity of the mind during so many hours, and the little fatigue felt by the body, prove how much real excitement exists.

5. The man habitually employed with literary works (as

many are, some from taste, some from necessity) finds it necessary to *manage* the mind. If temperance in eating were all that were wanted to give the mind an equable capacity, or equal action, the power would be within his reach. But, alas ! the faculties of the mind are not so easily controlled. Perhaps if we knew the causes of the alternating brilliancy and obscurity, the causes of the apparent caprice and real uncertainty of its movements, we might perchance find a remedy. But of them we are ignorant. Nor has the will any power to force the mind to act in the same way at all times.

The different modes of overcoming this variable action by literary men, would form a curious and interesting chapter to literary history. Another curious chapter might be compiled out of the habits of study adopted by different authors.\*

\* This has been done in part in D'Israeli's *Literary Character*, from which the following is abridged. Gray never sat down to compose any poetry without previously reading the works of Spenser. The most fervid verses of Homer, and the most tender of Euripides, were often repeated by Milton. Cicero informs us how his eloquence caught inspiration from a constant study of the Latin and Grecian poetry. When Bossuet had to compose a funeral oration, he was accustomed to retire for several days to his study, to ruminate over the pages of Homer ; and when asked the reason of this habit, he exclaimed,

—— magnam mihi mentem, animumque  
Delius inspiret Vates.

Alfieri often, before he wrote, prepared his mind by listening to music. Lord Bacon had music often played in the room adjoining his study. Milton listened to his organ for his solemn inspiration, and music was even necessary to Warburton. A celebrated French preacher, Massillon, was once found playing on a violin to screw his mind up to the pitch preparatory for his sermon which he was to preach before the court. Curran's favourite mode of meditation was with his violin in his hand.

Hadyn would never sit down to compose without being in full dress, with his great diamond ring, and the finest paper to write down his mu-

sical compositions. Rousseau has told us, when occupied by his celebrated romance, of the influence of the rose-coloured knots of ribbon which tied his portfolio, his fine paper, his brilliant ink, and his gold stand.

It is an unquestionable fact, that some profound thinkers cannot pursue their intellectual operations amidst the distractions of light and noise. In Plutarch's time they shewed a subterraneous place of study built by Demosthenes, and where he often continued for two or three months together. Malebranche, Hobbes, Corneille, and others, darkened their apartment when they wrote.

ON OBSCURE WRITINGS: STYLE; AND STRICTURES  
ON THE LITERATURE OF THE AGE.

~~~~~  
Symbol XXX.—*Septem ne edito.*

Never eat the cuttle-fish.
~~~~~

1. It is almost needless to say, there are writers who conceal their meaning under such a mass of words, or involve it in a style of expression so awkward, obscure, or confused, that their merit is wholly lost. Among some they pass for profound authors, but by all they are not understood. This is an error or a misfortune, whose punishment falls ultimately on the writer, because we can hardly expect, that, in this busy world, in which time is so short, that readers will take upon them the arduous task of making a patient inquiry for the meaning of a bad writer, who, perhaps, after all, has no distinct idea of his subject. Generally, men in reading a book are apt to indulge in the idea, that the author wrote for a purpose, and that the book, if understood, must contain his design; that, in a word, the writer has a meaning in what he writes. For a production of this kind acts like a valve to an engine; it is supposed to carry off the expanding ideas of the mind; to give an escape to the effervescence and superfluities of a mind in a high state of action; for which, if there were no

provision made by society, man would betake himself to the woods and the banks of rivers, or become a pest to his neighbourhood, by orally holding forth on questions that, by being pent up, are to him a source of uneasiness. It is thus that poets especially, who are known to possess *extreme modesty*, are found echoing their verses to the desert air; and in this way conceive they are conferring a benefit on mankind, as well as relieving themselves of a burden too heavy to be borne. It is on the self-same principle that demagogues are so troublesome to society, for they are men who never write books.

It is obvious, however, that in the action of the mental valve, when the effect ends in a book, the expanding thoughts or emotions which escape are mere froth and empty bubbles, if the mind can generate nothing better. The expansive power is alike in the great, as well as in the small, machine, but the latter is often mistaken by the hissing and noise it makes for the former; that is to say, the mind overflowing with froth and useless matter, is as proud of its production, as if something great had come into being. It has all the signs of mental greatness, and the author willingly believes, therefore, that the valve is not open without good to man.

2. We may say with some truth, that an obscure writer resembles the *cuttle-fish*, which possesses a peculiar faculty, noticed by Plutarch, of emitting a black liquid from under the neck, by which it perturbs the water, conceals itself from view, and escapes its adversaries. It was this property which, no doubt, swayed our great moralist to make it the foundation of a symbol. The cuttle-fish becomes typical of deceivers—of secret enemies—of mystical writers, or sophistical reasoners; and of that great

body of men, who take a secret delight in perturbing the crystal fount of truth. Of that body, too, who dress up vice in the garb of virtue, and secretly undermine the principles of morals, by confounding vice with virtue, and virtue with vice.

3. There is no one mixing with the world, who has not in his experience frequently discovered an insignificant creature, who delights in an air of mystery. Things minute in themselves become magnified to his vision. In every hot and intemperate word against the monarchy, he discovers treason or sedition. Every event of little consequence is, in his eyes, the precursor of a revolution. He rarely expresses an opinion on any subject, but finds an admirable substitute in a solemn shake of the head, or a grave smile. In this manner he ingeniously conceals his ignorance; and he who successfully can conceal his ignorance, often passes for a wise man. He will be found curious and inquisitive about the affairs of others; but close and reserved about his own. It has been observed, that a pen is the extinguisher of a fluent and discursive speaker; so would it expose the shallowness and ignorance of this creature. But he will never be found to commit himself to an ordeal that would proclaim his hollow pretensions.

4. The day has been when we delighted in poring over obscure and mystical writings—the understanding of which was secondary to the pleasure of the magic-spell; a pleasure similar to that derived from a number of beautiful objects thrown together, or to that feeling we might have in entering the darkened cave of an enchanter. We were deeply impressed with the idea of profundity in those writings; never suspecting, in our innocence, that they were unintelligible. There is a pleasure in disentangling the

web of sophistry, or in uplifting the veil of mysticism ; and though we succeeded not in either, we enjoyed the pleasure of the trial, in the implicit belief, that there was something to be discovered. The same natural bias, perhaps, has led us to become the *Œdipus* of the Pythagorean symbols.

But experience of men as authors has led us now to the conclusion, that what formerly we considered as obscure writings, are no deeper than a proverb,—not half so deep as one of our symbols. In proverbs and symbols there is sometimes concealed a gem of great value, while in those writings the mystery is in the confusion of language, and not in any remarkable depth of thought. This discovery only excited our pity and contempt. And now, thank heaven, we are no longer to be deceived by words. We can tear off the flimsy veil in which men hide their ideas, and expose their ludicrous nakedness to the world. This we consider a great step towards the possession of wisdom.

5. Simplicity is the companion of wisdom, as candour is the associate of great minds. If a writer be wise, simplicity should be the character of his style. If enduring works are graceful or elegant in style, they will be also simple. Simplicity pleases in every age, still pleases, even when the style of popular writers is full of figures and metaphors ; because simplicity appeals to nature, and nature is simple. Though our manners be artificial, and therefore unnatural, nature and simplicity are still the assumed standards of taste. Though public writers walk on stilts, and delight many, the mind loves to descend to the equable and easy habit of natural life ; as royalty is pleased sometimes to lay down the sceptre and put off the purple.

The eagle, when satiated with the light, loves to retire into the shade. Nothing more delights a simple mind, doomed to the stiffness of etiquette, ceremony and forms, than to retire to the ease of a private station.

6. There are works of great genius and learning known to our literature, which are forgotten because of their style. They resemble a woman full of virtue, full of wisdom, but whose forbidding aspect drives us away. There are other works, again, not possessing one tythe of their merit, which flourish and are popular, chiefly on account of their captivating style. They are like another woman, who, with no depth of wisdom, or pretensions to learning, enchants us by her manners and conversation. Beauty of style in an author, is as valuable as a sweet voice in a woman. The grace, elegance, and ease of a popular writer delight us, as these qualifications please us in a woman. It is the power of manner, and that power is sometimes mighty.

7. In the particular of style, as well as of learning, we are far behind our ancestors. There is a depth and solidity in their works, poorly compensated by the feeble, shallow, ephemeral books of the present age. Their style is superior; but this is surpassed by the manifestations of thought and research, found in their works. Authors then were few in comparison, but they were *authors*, and not mere *book-makers*; their minds teemed with ideas, and overflowed with classical learning; their taste was highly polished, and, moreover, there is a charming grace in their constant allusions to the great works of Greek and Roman writers. But the remarkable difference is in the vigour of their minds, the copiousness and ease of their language, the depth and strength of their thoughts; their books resemble solid, substantial buildings erected



for future times ; ours resemble houses hastily and carelessly piled up for a temporary purpose. They are the pyramids of Egypt contrasted with monuments of modern architecture ; or more properly, perhaps, the architecture of the middle age, in comparison with that of the present.

8. We have too many writers, because all are readers. The number of books leave men no leisure to think. This may be called the reading age ; it is not certainly entitled to be called a thinking era. We now pay men to think for us ; but those we pay—the authors—have no more time to think than the readers. The demand on literary talent is incessant ; and if the supply is to be proportionate, how can the writers think and digest ? The consequence is, that original thought is now almost unknown ; our books are mere copies, versions, or compilations. The ideas and thoughts of past times have supplied an inexhaustible fund to modern writers ; but the gold has been beaten so thin, that a whole book is written to illustrate one idea ; or, to use a figure, we must now search through a bushel of chaff for one single grain of corn. Old books are books of thought ; present books are mere combinations of words. Verbosity is as common in writing as loquacity in speaking. We are literally overwhelmed with words ; we begin to take the sound for the sense ; as if a mere ingenious string of lines in metre and rhyme can constitute poetry !

9. One reason for this state of things may be assigned to the hasty manner in which books are now written. As we are better educated, better informed, and, in some respects, more enlightened than our immediate ancestors, our literature should have advanced in proportion ; whereas, it has certainly degenerated, and assumed a retrograde

movement. Not, perhaps, because of want of talent, or want of learning, but because of want of patience, and of labour bestowed. The variety desired by every one is an enemy to excellence. As the discursive reader goes from book to book, so the writer aims at the diversified talent of writing on every subject. The dread of ignorance in this age drives us to know every thing,—a little of every subject; than which there can be no greater enemy to perfection and excellence in any one thing. It seems to be a law of the human mind, that it can never attain a perfect knowledge but of one thing at a time; this only is to be attained by close attention, and by undivided study. The most perfect mechanic, the most perfect, indeed, in any thing, is he who limits himself to one single branch, by which constant practice leads at length to excellence.

10. Those great works of bygone times, which are immortal, as much as any production of man can be so styled, were the result of sometimes a whole life, and always the result of indomitable labour, excessive care, scrupulous accuracy, deep inquiry, and abundant learning. As some writers make multifarious collections of other men's thoughts before they become authors; so these men had well stored their minds with the chief excellencies of ancient and modern learning, as well as collected a variety of thoughts from long reflection. Thus is it that their works appear to teem with fertility; they overflow with rich and novel ideas. No doubt, too, the style, the language, and mode of expression, were formed from long study and patient practice; for in no other way can we explain the luxurious richness and variety of their language, and the deep comprehensive way in which the style is sustained throughout.

But, after all, the secret is in the length of time expended on those works. They were not given to the world till they had satisfied the taste of a strict rigid criticism. Perfection and haste are seldom found co-operating. The ease that seems natural is acquired; the smoothness that flows on like a deep river, is the result of intense labour and care. In reading a beautiful poem, the language and ideas seem to come with spontaneous harmony and facility, as if the genius of the author had inspired him with all the accessories of poetry, as well as the sentiments, the ideas, and the imagination. But if we could examine the original manuscript, we should find it almost illegible from erasures, and alterations of thoughts and expression,—exhibiting as many changes in the author's mind while composing. The taste of the true poet is exquisite, and his work, or poem, must strictly conform to it before he can think it has reached perfection.

11. Genius gives the imagination, the idea of the beautiful, and the originality of thought; but the artificial, or mechanical part of poetry, is acquired, as language, style, expression, metre, and such like. It is in these accessories, that the labour, skill, and taste of the poet are displayed.

Genius, then, in its crude state, is rather a capacity than a power; it may lie dormant, and be of no use to the gifted, unless it be developed; as every faculty of the mind must be, ere it can effect any great design. Taste and judgment are peculiarly improved by cultivation; so is language, and the magic power of expression; so is the delicacy of the ear, in measure and intonation; and so is the mind itself, the great originator, by learning and experience.

ON AN ACTIVE LIFE; THE *SUMMUM BONUM*; AND  
A DEFENCE OF EPICURUS.

~~~~~  
Symbol XIV.—Dextrum pedem primum calceato ; sinistrum vero
primum lavato.

Put on the right shoe first ; and wash the left foot first.
~~~~~

1. It may be said by those who have profoundly read and meditated on these disquisitions, that at length the veil of Isis has been uplifted. One hundred Egyptian cycles have been marked on the scroll of time, since the wisdom of those symbols was divulged in the school of Pythagoras. For the greater part of that period have they been closed to the mind of man : it is only now—even in this generation of all the least learned—that the mystery has been unfolded, and the true essence given to the world. Through these essays (works of labour, beyond the idea of the ignorant), all may now be initiated into this grand system of ancient philosophy ; all may drink of the sacred fountain of wisdom, without pain or penalty. O blessed generation ! O happy posterity !

2. The name of *Cædipus* is immortal ; one signal effort of skill, in solving the mystery of the sphinx, gained him this honour. His success in that great masterpiece carried with it the surprise and admiration of all men. They

who read this symbol, will be equally surprised at our solution of it. The first part enjoins an active life; the second part enjoins us to enjoy life, without luxury or effeminate pleasures. Be quick in doing good, but slow in self-indulgence. Let us first consider our duties in life; and then it is time to attend to our own comforts and pleasures. Be active; eschew indolence. Such is the sum and substance of a symbol that may baffle the acutest intellect in these times.

3. Most, if not all moralists, now admit that an active life is the only natural one to man. The dreams of happiness sought by monks, hermits, and solitaires of all kinds, have vanished into thin smoke. It is not only the duty of man to spend his life in activity; but the wise Creator has caused activity to be a source of pleasure; and has, therefore, stamped upon it, as it were, his approbation. While idleness, on the contrary, carries its own punishment along with it; thus proving an idle life to be opposed to the purposes of our creation. An active life is the best friend of virtue; it has become a proverb, that idleness is the parent of mischief. In the world, virtue shines brighter amid the trials and temptations to which it is exposed, for, as Lord Bacon beautifully remarks,—“true virtue is like precious odours—the sweeter the more incensed and crushed.” As the Spartans were not less chaste, because they were accustomed to see women in *puris naturalibus*; so our power of resisting vice is increased by mixing with mankind, and co-operating with them in the business of life. It may be said also, that man is not made for himself alone; he is intended for the social state, and is bound to fulfil its duties. He is one among many; a member of one great family; and every thing relating to his fellow-

creatures should excite in him a fellow-feeling, and friendly sympathy.

The Christian religion has opened up a far more extensive field of active duties, than man could ever have conceived in a state of nature. Though monks have sought the deep caverns of the earth; there to indulge their monomania, or bemoan their guilt, such a life of pure selfishness is not anywhere countenanced in Scripture. On the contrary, the duties enforced there on man, in relation to man, obviously require a social, as well as an active life. Charitableness is a Christian virtue; brotherly love another; but Christian charity requires us to seek for objects on which to dispense it; while brotherly love is more than an abstract affection—namely, mutual interchange of good deeds.

4. Luxury and pleasure are keenly sought after by all classes. They are not considered criminal, and therefore are indulged in and enjoyed without any exceptions. But though this be true, we must be candid enough to admit, that we have refinement in our luxuries and pleasures. There is not that coarseness and brutality characteristic of people in ages less civilized; nor do we carry our luxury to that criminally extravagant degree described of the Roman patricians. Perhaps ostentation is, after all, at the root of luxury, in our repasts; for happily nature has put a curb on the appetites of men. The penalties of excessive indulgence, in this particular, are severely felt in satiety and disgust. And this may be remarked, that what we are accustomed to daily, is no longer a luxury to us: so that the banquet that would fiercely excite the desire of a poor man, is observed with apathy and indifference by the rich. The senses which afford pleasure, are,

by a decree of nature, blunted in the intemperate gratification ; that which gratifies and pleases, when moderately enjoyed, becomes loathsome when taken to excess. The picture is still more dreadful, when intemperance, as it must do in time, makes a man loathe his very life, and takes away the very capacity of enjoyment. The most luxurious banquet to such a wretched object, only excites in him disgust and painful reflections.

5. In other pleasures, the degree of enjoyment must be left to the good sense and conscience of the individual. It would be folly and presumption to prescribe a rule to every man. All pleasures not criminal ; all pleasures not forbidden, are innocent when temperately enjoyed. To abstain from any thing that God has given for the happiness of the creature, on a mere whim or scruple, is not far from impiety. Whilst he has not forbidden man from enjoying, why should man become a lawgiver to others ? True philosophy teaches, that innocent pleasures are neither enemies of wisdom nor of virtue. The great evil is to attach to them too much importance ; to centre our happiness in them ; to exalt them to be the principal end of life, instead of the past-times. There are far higher pleasures within our reach ; pleasures more lasting, more substantial, and refined, than those pleasures that merely please the senses. The pleasures of the moral and intellectual faculties are divine in comparison.

Socrates, in opposing those who contended that pleasure is the Supreme Good, said, that though all swine and goats should accord in this opinion, yet he would never be persuaded our felicity was placed in the enjoyment of corporeal delights, as long as intellect has dominion over all things. Which would be true if Pleasure meant the plea-

sure of sense ; but Porphyry, who quotes this opinion of the great moralist, intended it to be a shaft thrown at the system of Epicurus.

6. The *Summum Bonum*, or Chief Good, was a mighty question of controversy in ancient times. Every philosopher who founded a new system had his ideal wise man—a being representative of a perfect man. Agreeing that individual happiness was the chief end of man, it was a question among them as to the means to be used in its attainment. The wise man in each system was the personation of those qualities the several philosophers believed to be productive of this great good. It is but natural to suppose that the wisest men would differ on points of this nature. They not only differed, but, like the fiercest polemics, waged war against each other ; abused, traduced, and calumniated each other. The controversy was laudable ; the heat with which it was carried on was ridiculous. Some imagined that the *summum bonum* consisted in tranquillity of mind (no bad guess) ; some in the possession of knowledge and virtue (not far from the truth) ; some in stoical indifference to pain, and all the evils of life. Each may have imperfections ; but all together they would compose a very tolerable system. But no philosopher then started up as an Eclectic in morals ; perhaps the very attempt would have been scouted as an invasion of property ; of primary rights ; because truth was very little regarded in comparison with the desire of distinction, or the honour as a founder of a new system.

7. Epicurus, who aspired to this distinction, in an evil hour, produced a new *summum bonum* ; that chief good being *Pleasure*. The appearance of a new man on the stage was sure to be met with hatred and abuse ; so jeal-



ous were these philosophers of their popularity ; but Epicurus, in using a word of such doubtful signification, gave them a handle for vehement attack. If he had searched the whole category of Greek words, he could not have found another so effectual in exciting all the bigotry of men against him. It rallied every latent prejudice ; arrayed every zealot in religion against him ; stirred up the whole body of pseudo-moralists ; and an army of this kind, led on by the heads of other systems, warmed by almost personal hatred, and embittered by the prejudices and misrepresentations of their leaders, proved too much for Epicurus. He made a gallant struggle, but without effect. He was finally worsted, and all the concentrated ridicule of his enemies followed him. Defence, explanation, justification, were all in vain. So long as the word *pleasure* characterized his chief good, they would not profane their ears by listening to him.

8. Strange is it, marvellously strange, that Epicurus has never recovered the effect of that unjust condemnation. Epicurus and the Epicurean philosophy have been by-words in the mouths of men ever since ; though nothing is more certain than that Epicurus personally was a man of unblemished virtue ; and that his doctrines were not such as his enemies have described them. Some few have made the attempt to redeem his character ; but the popular impression is too strong to be effaced, even after so many ages.

9. The very name of Epicurus has become a type of sensual pleasure. It has been incorporated into modern languages as a word expressive of refinement in corporeal pleasures ; the falsehood of ancient times has thus been adopted by all nations. “ Who can but pity the virtuous

Epicurus," says Sir Thomas Browne, "who is commonly conceived to have placed his chief felicity in pleasure and sensual delights; and hath, therefore, left an infamous name behind him?" Many place implicit reliance on authority, historical and religious, but here is one infamous lie first propagated in the very times of Epicurus, handed down *secula seculorum*.

10. The Stoics were his worst enemies, his bitterest persecutors, his most rancorous calumniators. They raised against him a kind of religious fanaticism, though (blind bigots) their chief deity was Fate or Destiny. They professed to be pious; they constituted themselves the guardians of virtue; they deemed themselves the friends of truth; and many, taking their professions as marks of sincerity, were disposed to take the base coin they circulated for gold. They were the Pharisees among ancient philosophers; distinguished by the same hollow, hypocritical professions, the same contempt of others, and by the same lofty opinion of themselves.

"All their tedious talk is but vain boast,  
Or subtle shifts conviction to evade."

11. It may be said, there must be stronger reasons than are here given for the conduct of the Stoics to Epicurus; the only reasons we can assign are those passions which influence bodies of men as well as individuals—jealousy, envy, and consequent hatred. The school of Epicurus was at first extremely popular, and bade fair to seduce many of the lukewarm disciples of Zeno; it possessed a more numerous band of followers, and was increasing in respect and influence from day to day—a reason quite adequate to excite the rancour of the rival sect.

This painful fact was not likely, however, to be ac-

knowledge, as such a confession would have weakened them more and more ; nevertheless, it was known, and an effort of some kind became necessary to recover the lost ground. Instead of vying with the Epicureans, on the legitimate ground of their doctrinal differences ; instead of bidding for popularity by improving their own system, or proving its superiority, they set about to proclaim the immoral tendency of the Epicurean principles. This is a mode of attack easily comprehended by the vulgar, and was more likely than any other to collect all the ill-disposed and the fanatical against him. It is a mode of attack employed often among ourselves, even though not pagans, to decry the character or popularity of a public man ; and we see how often it is successful, though the foundation be a naked lie.

Epicurus is supposed to have been an atheist ; but whether true or false, it does not appear his religious opinions entered into the controversy ; even if they had, there could be nothing more inconsistent than the Stoics attacking him on this ground ; because, though they seem ostensibly to have acknowledged a sort of god in the *Soul* of the *World*, it is well known they believed him to be subject to the irrevocable decrees of Fate. Nor was it because of his irreligion that his name was held in such bad odour at any time, but solely because of the false interpretation of his moral doctrines.

The Stoics are represented by the formally pious part of the community : the Epicureans by those who use reason in their opinions, and who are the friends of all rational and innocent enjoyment.

12. Long after this unrighteous fever of persecution ceased, we find even some of the Stoics doing justice to

the memory of this much-abused philosopher ; as Seneca, for example, who candidly confesses that Epicurus taught nothing inconsistent with virtue and sound reason. Cicero, again, although he objects to some of his principles, expresses for him a marked personal esteem, which he would not have done had the charges popularly received, through the falsehoods of the Stoics, been true. And St Austin, who is not likely to have countenanced any system of an immoral tendency, even declares he would have preferred him to all the men that antiquity can boast of, if he had believed there were rewards and punishments hereafter,—a doctrine which the Stoics no more admitted than Epicurus. If they had made such a doctrine part of their system, they would have proved themselves very bad logicians ; for the doctrine of rewards and punishments can hardly be reconciled with a belief in the over-ruling power of Fate. This is clearly perceived by Lucien, in the Dialogue of “ *The Cynic and Jupiter*,” in which the philosopher confounds the god, by proving to him the anomaly of Fate, and the belief in the doctrine of rewards and punishments hereafter ; and the folly of mankind offering sacrifices to beings like Jupiter, who confess they are the mere instruments in the hands of an eternal Destiny. Fate, therefore, is not only irreconcilable with the doctrine alluded to, but it uproots every principle of religion.

13. The private life of Epicurus, as we have already said, gave the lie to the misrepresentations of his enemies. The “ sty of Epicurus ” is an epithet they were fond of, as if his life and habits resembled the most impure and most sensual of animals ; whereas he seems to have erred in carrying the virtue of temperance and frugality to an unnecessary extent. He says of himself, that he lived for

twenty years on one penny a day, which was enough to buy one slice of bread and a draught of spring water ; with such fare, he envied not Jupiter himself with all his nectar and ambrosia.

14. The great error, the fundamental error of Epicurus—the cause of all the obloquy brought on his name—is one of common occurrence among projectors of new opinions or new systems ; who, understanding, as we presume, what they mean, do not condescend to enlighten others. Pleasure is a word of such varied meaning, that it behoved him to have given a definition of it as introduced into his system. Among the vulgar, as often happens among the religious, its sense is restricted to carnal enjoyment ; but in the Epicurean sense, or philosophical acceptation, it comprehends pleasures of mind as well as of the body. In this sense the word is the only one that could be made the foundation of a system ; because no other that we know of can be equally comprehensive. It is a word which, to use a vulgar expression, sticks in the throat of a Pharisee ; but, as in the case of the Stoics, this arises from a stupid ignorance, or a willing misunderstanding. A good Christian need not hesitate to receive the word *Pleasure* as understood in the Epicurean philosophy.

15. Epicurus, in opposition to the Cyrenæans, who placed the sovereign good in *Motion*, or an active life, made the happiness of man consist in tranquillity of mind and ease of the body. This tranquillity is only to be found in the moderate use of all his faculties ; in the temperate enjoyment of his legitimate desires, appetites, and passions : it results from that concord of mind and body arising from a life well spent, in which all the senses, and appetites, and feelings, and desires, act in unbroken har-

mony with the mental and moral faculties. Any excess or intemperance in one thing would destroy this harmony, because it would be inconsistent with wisdom, and offensive to the moral feeling. To the gratification of sense, nature has annexed pleasure; to the exercise of the mind, and the practice of virtue, she has also annexed pleasure; and if so, those pleasures are surely to be enjoyed. In brutes, nature regulates the exercise of their senses and faculties by instinct; but man, to whom is awarded a greater circle of enjoyment, has guides and monitors in his own breast; and the degree of pleasure to be enjoyed must therefore be approved of by the moral sense, and regulated by what is agreeable to wisdom.

Happiness, according to Epicurus, is the end of man's existence; and pleasure is the means to attain it. This happiness can only exist where there is serenity of mind. There can be no serenity of mind, if any pleasure is indulged in to excess; or if those pleasures are criminal, or unlawful; because such pleasures bring on a conflict between the desires and the moral sense. In their enjoyment there is a sting, that cannot consist with the perfect harmony which alone can give happiness and peace of mind.

Ponder on these three maxims of Epicurus.

I. The acquisition of wisdom is so solid a good in itself, that it can never be lost.

II. The wise man takes care to preserve the inexplicable blessing of an undisturbed and quiet mind; even amidst the groans and complaints that excess of pain extorts from him.

III. The wise man ought never to drink to excess; neither must he spend his nights in revelling and feasting.

## · ON PEACE.

~~~~~  
Symbol XV.—*Ignem gladio ne scalpas.*
Stir not up the fire with a sword.
 ~~~~~

1. A SWORD is the proper emblem of strife, or contention; and, in Sacred Writ, is often employed as a type, or emblematic figure, of fiery times, of war, and civil commotion. To stir up the fire with a sword is, therefore, to perpetuate these evils; to add fuel to flame; where there is passion, or anger, or hatred, to increase it; where there is an inclination to rest or be at peace, to cry out, "Let there be no peace;" and, like the demon of discord, delight only in the din of contention, and the turbulence of furious passion. For the nature of an evil spirit delights not in peace. Peace is essentially good; it is harmony; it is music; sweet is it on the lips; delightful to the holy; for it is truly from heaven. But anger, revenge, turbulence, and joy in strife and contention, or such like, are not of heaven, or of God, but of hell and the evil one. They are demons or deformed creatures, that rise from the pit of perdition, to be looked upon only with horror and disgust; as we regard the shadowy beings of Milton's creation—Sin and Death, and their hideous offspring. Among the ancients, they were per-

sonated under the name of Furies ; beings sent forth by fate to fulfil her inexorable decrees ; beings devoid of all sentiments of pity, or feelings of remorse. Creatures of this nature, created by the imagination and poetical genius of Greece, had their being in the personation of evil passions found in the human breast ; and their indifference to the calls of pity and humanity ; their headlong fury and zeal, in executing their respective offices, were only analogies drawn from the impetuosity, the recklessness, and the fury, of human passions.

2. There are many who cannot bear peace ; who delight in perpetuating discord and strife. We may call out Peace, Peace, but they will have no peace ; its heavenly tranquillity cannot be felt, or enjoyed, or appreciated, by natures that have more pleasure in making a hell on earth than a heaven. It is only the good that can fully love peace ; who can fully enjoy its blessed influence ; and who pour oil on the troubled waters ; for in having peace on earth, however mixed and impure, they are sensible of a foretaste of that peace and tranquillity in a future life, the lot of the weary traveller through this world. Here it is a finite and comprehensible pleasure, which all may feel and enjoy ; but no man can tell or describe the pleasures of that peace hereafter, which we may emphatically say passes all understanding. Heaven is described to us as a state of peace ; and what higher attraction can it have, to those who look upon life here as a weary pilgrimage of the soul towards Zion, or the heavenly place of rest and peace ? “ O God ! ” they may exclaim, “ let us participate in this peace ; in that measure of peace afforded to man on earth ; the better to prepare him for fully enjoying the peace which passes the understanding of man in



heaven. When we look up on high, and behold the impress of thy power on the starry firmament, we feel some tokens of peace, not known on earth. In reflecting on thy presence everywhere ; in empty space ; or in the planetary world ; or amid the glories of nature ; we can behold no marks of that wild turbulence or hateful din, which points out, and indicates, the footsteps of man."

The only moments of peace we can find here, are those moments scantily allowed to man, when, by the spirituality of his better nature, he shuts out from the soul the doings of the external world, and becomes oblivious to the very existence of mankind ; to the cares of life ; and every day occurrences of life ; and betakes himself to a kind of ecstatic contemplation on God, and the works of God. Even of those delightful moments of solitude and heavenly meditation, which we snatch from time to devote to eternity, man would deprive us, in the pursuit of gain, or the acquisition of pleasure ; if we were not to fly from the world, and, with zealous and forethought design, shut ourselves out from it.

3. As true religion is the cause of peace to the human soul, so is it the cause of peace, concord, and happiness, to every family. True religion (or the spirit of religion, in contradistinction to the *professed* religion of the world) is essentially the cause of peace ; because it moderates the passions of man ; purifies his thoughts ; elevates his meditations ; makes him love goodness and virtue for their own sake ; and, finally, endows him with the wisdom of the serpent, and the simplicity of the dove. At the same time, it seems to harmonize every faculty of the mind, and emotion of the heart ; allays every discordance which tends to disturb the universal calm ; inspires love to all men, and

therefore checks, or destroys, the feeling of hatred to any ; and having God, as always present, through the influence of true religion, he thinks and acts as if God were always visible, and guides his thoughts and actions by His pleasure or displeasure.

4. True religion being the cause of peace ; peace betokens in man the existence of true religion. Therefore, when we find a man who makes religion an occasion for excitement ; when it agitates his soul as human passions do ; and partakes of their violence and inconsistency ; we may doubt whether he is under the influence of true religion. Let us beware of the same deception, or snare, in ourselves ; for it is a dangerous thing to believe we have religion in our souls, when we have only a sentiment called religion.

5. The same peace we court at home, let us carry out when we go into the world, and mix with men. In all our actions, and even in our modes of speech and manners, let us shew what spirit possesses us. We must be calm and conciliatory, never, in any case, descending to personal quarrels or animosities. Let us keep in mind the wise proverb of Solomon—*A soft answer turneth away wrath.*

As the intelligence and determination of the human eye is said, by travellers, to awe and subdue the fiercest of wild animals ; so we shall find that there is no more effectual enemy to rage and passion in others, than calmness and command of temper in ourselves.

6. If others will stir up the fire with a sword, let us not imitate their example. It is a pleasure (if it can be called one) which appears to partake of much the same character as that pleasure which the devil is said to enjoy when he sees a soul fall from virtue, and revolt from

heaven : in its prospective happiness he has no interest ; but in its eternal misery, the consequence of sin, he rejoices. All those fierce elements of discord, arising from passion ; the noise and tumult of contention ; the rage of anger ; and mouldering fire of hate ; the indulgence of malice, and gnawing desire of revenge ; are emotions and passions in which he ever delights.

ON ANGER AND MALICE.

~~~~~  
Symbol XVII.—*Ollæ vestigium in cinere confundito.*
Leave no mark of the pot in the ashes.
~~~~~

1. UNDER familiar expressions of this kind, we have a system of the most excellent morals ; rules of life and conduct most valuable ; rudely conveyed, indeed, but not less useful ; the offspring of a great and original mind. The finest gems in nature are often found encrusted with an opaque covering, which conceals their purity and brilliance. Some of the most delicious fruit can only be discovered by breaking the outer rind. We often find virtue and honesty dwelling in a body so deformed, as to be considered a freak of nature. Under this symbol of the Samian philosopher is concealed a pearl beyond all price ; more to be coveted than any of all the gems and precious stones in the bosom of the earth.

“ He commands,” says Sir Thomas Browne, “ to deface the print of a cauldron in the ashes, after it hath boiled, which strictly to observe were condemnable superstition ; but hereby he covertly adviseth us not to persevere in anger, but after our choler hath boiled, to retain no impression thereof.”

2. Anger is a natural passion of the human heart, and

having been intended, no doubt, for wise, useful, preserving purposes, it cannot be evil, *sui generis*, but good and necessary. But when it is permitted to rage uncontrolled, then it becomes an evil; because it is not given to be the tyrant or master, but the slave or servant, of the reason and will. As the arm is given by which to exert the physical energies of the body, acting subserviently to the will; so anger is a mere agent or instrument to carry out and fulfil the mental energies.

3. The precept does not require us to destroy or root out the passion God has given us, as if he had placed a serpent in our bosom; but only to restrain, curb it, and indulge no malice; and in this he adopts a more temperate, and therefore wiser course than Zeno and the Stoics, whose absurd zeal and impracticable professions ended in the unnatural tenets and extravagant practices of Pyrrho and others. This as well as other passions are designed to impel us to action; for without them, the mind would fall asleep, and succumb into lethargy and indolence. They try the vigour and strength of the mind itself, in the act of subduing and controlling them; and we can have no better mark of true wisdom, and of a well-regulated mind, than in the strict obedience of the passions to the will.

4. Horace calls anger a short madness—" *Ira furor brevis est*;" that is, when it assumes the tyrant, and acts superior to the judgment and the will; and in such cases it is rather to be called *rage* than anger. To be under the passion of anger, is not always to be mad, for madness implies want of reason; whereas we may be angry without being in a rage, and may be justified in being angry in a good cause, or for a good reason; as in being indignant at an injury designedly done to us; as in feeling indignation

at vice, or the wicked conduct of men, who, to gratify their passions, will plunge others into misery.

5. But we are commanded not to persevere in our anger, but to forget and forgive the cause of it; not to indulge lasting hatred to the evil doer, but to the vice or crime. Forgiveness of injury is the truest mark of magnanimity; there is more of the divine than the earthly nature in it, more of God than of man. Christian morals demand a greater sacrifice; for they require us to forgive even our enemies, to bless them in spite of all their malice, and even to love them, that is, to do them all the good we can, let them injure us never so much, and so heap living coals of fire on their head.

6. If a man would be miserable, there is no more effectual way we know of, than to indulge malice and the desire of revenge. These debasing passions take possession of the mind, to the injury of every good emotion, and corrode like rust on metals. Long indulged, they will at length develope their odious marks on the face, and expose to all the world what we might be most anxious to conceal; for often the most malicious minds make the greatest pretensions to equanimity, or at least to indifference. They sour the temper, destroy every feeling of charity and benevolence to our species; make us objects of pity or disgust to all the world, to be shunned by our dearest friends or relations; and their existence manifestly proclaims to mankind that, whatever be our professions, the Christian spirit can have no place in our minds. We shall live despised, and go hence without the tribute of a tear.

*“Iram qui vincit, hostem superat maximum.”*

## ON THE PRACTICE OF VIRTUE.

~~~~~  
Symbol XVII.—*Hominibus onus simul imponendum, non detrahendum.*
Help men to burden, but not to unburden themselves.
 ~~~~~

INTERPRETATIO.—“ We ought not,” says Dacier, “ to help men who live in laziness and luxury, but incline them to pass their days in labour, and in the exercise of virtue; and to impose on them more toilsome and harder tasks, the farther they advance in the ways of perfection. This is the sense St Jerome, in his *Apology*, has given this symbol.—‘ *Oneratis supponendum onus, deponentibus non communicandum ; id est, ad virtutem incedentibus augenda præcepta, tradentes se otio reliquendos.*’ ”

1. To stimulate or encourage men to the practice of virtue, is especially the province of the moral writer ; for, by the study of human nature in the abstract, and of mankind in society, he has discovered, that in the love and practice of virtue consists the true happiness and good of man. The happiness of man, as an individual, is secured by virtue ; whilst the happiness of mankind in general is augmented by it. That peace of mind (the very essence of happiness) flowing from an honest life, virtuous conduct, which every man acknowledges, is carried out into the

great world, or ocean of life, as rivers run and mingle in the sea. What promotes the welfare of man, must always be an object of paramount importance; there is nothing on which this welfare more depends than on virtue; yet strange is it, that men seek out for themselves other channels, new sources of happiness, and prefer the illusions of pleasure, fleeting and temporary, to the substantial and abiding happiness growing from the love and practice of virtue. And can we be surprised, therefore, at human life being a scene of misery and bitter disappointment? He who prefers artificial to natural pleasures, in the gratification of sense, shall soon find, to his cost, that he has entailed upon himself a long list of maladies and physical evils, amongst which even natural pleasures, however simple, cannot be enjoyed. So he who, for a season, places his happiness in any one of the many phantoms which men madly pursue, shall, in due time, become convinced of what the moralist could have wisely taught him, in the opening and spring of his career. Generally, however, man is too stiff-necked to bend his mind to the cold dictates of prudence and wisdom, especially in the day of youth and of passion; and hence he leaves it to the painful experience of the future, to teach him the lesson of the past. In the moments of calm reflection, after the storm of a life of pleasure, one sad truth shall become obvious to his mind,—namely, the immeasurable superiority of a virtuous life over one of pleasure. Out of all the pleasures he has enjoyed, on which he staked his happiness; for which, perhaps, he sacrificed virtue and reputation; for which, it may be said, he forfeited his soul; nothing remains,—not a wreck or shadow remains. Whatever he may recall, by the fiat of memory, affords no agree-



able pleasure to the mind, no satisfaction to the soul; because such pleasures as depend on the organs of sense, are only felt in the moment of gratification, and are nothing when past and gone. It is, therefore, that the man of pleasure (not necessarily criminal pleasure) resembles the prodigal spendthrift, who, in the gratifications of life, exhausts his means, and at last has nothing left in exchange for his fortune. The pleasures, dearly purchased, are no more, and when once gone they are valueless, and must again be paid for to be enjoyed. All that such characters have bequeathed to them are repentance, remorse, self-reproach; in many cases cureless maladies of mind and body, and in all cases a wreck of life to be spent in misery and disappointment.

2. "Look on that picture, and then on this." What is Virtue, so highly prized by the good? Is it a mere word; or is it really a substantial good? Is it only a name by which to rally the forces of bigotry or enthusiasm? Virtue we may define to be the development, or outward manifestation, of the good. Goodness is in the soul passive; virtue is goodness in its active state; operating upon the mind first, and then impelling to outward action on mankind,—on the world external. It seeks the happiness of the creature by inspiring pure and lofty emotions; inculcating moral precepts; weeding out sin and every degree of wickedness; and displays itself in generosity of feeling, and in benevolence to all. It seeks the happiness and peace of the individual, by setting up in his mind a standard by which to regulate his actions, and, in conformity with which, his happiness can alone be secured. Virtue is an active principle, like religion, and is ever bewailing the conduct of mankind. It is ready to

do willing service to every one, and is no respecter of persons. "*Nulli præclusa virtus est,*" says Seneca elegantly, "*omnibus patet; omnes admittit; omnes invitat; ingenuos, libertinos, servos, reges et exules; non eligit domum, nec censum; nudo homine contenta est:* Virtue has no partial favours or exclusions; she is open to all; she admits all; she invites all; she asks no wealth or ancestry; but she asks the man, the master, and the slave; the cottager and his lord; the sovereign and the exile."

3. Virtue is said to be its own reward; because the practice of it brings that which men are eagerly in pursuit of—happiness. And thus sensible of the incalculable blessings she confers, she generously and kindly desires all to participate; or, as Seneca says, "like fire, it seeks to turn all things into itself." It is the only true philosopher's stone; for it transmutes whatever it touches into gold. It is the only *elixir vitæ*; for whilst it preserves us here, and cures us of all mental distempers, it will pass with us hence, and be our consolation for ever. It constitutes the only mark of distinction between one man and another worth observing; for all other marks are accidental or conventional, but this only is real and specific. According to the excellent maxim of Juvenal, "virtue is the only true nobility;" it instantly, by the sovereignty of heaven, ennobles the possessor, and gives him a rank containing the honours conferred by earthly monarchs. In truth, in connection with religion, we are told it shall hereafter confer upon him a crown of glory, and so far exalt him above those monarchs who have earthly rank and honours to bestow.

4. The excellency and admirable quality of virtue consists in this, that all its positive acts are accompanied by the most delightful emotions; and even the very reflection

on them creates pleasure that may be recalled at will. Hence, what difference between it and the so-called pleasure of the world, which we have already remarked, does not leave any trace behind ! On the contrary, what marks remain of the pleasures of life are often to be lamented, as satiety and disgust ; disease and associating affliction ; remorse and consequent melancholy. But in virtue there is no satiety, for, as Bacon says of the love of knowledge, satisfaction and appetite are perpetually interchangeable. In this distinction between pleasure and virtue, God may be said to have stamped on them their genuine intrinsic value ; so that if this be true, no excuse is left to us for preferring the base to the pure coin. No man, with common sense, can deny that besides this there are many other attestations to the excellence of virtue and worthlessness of pleasure, so clear and obvious, that only the fool would choose the one in preference to the other. It is not because this is a doubtful question, as matters of opinion are, that most men run after the phantom instead of the substance ; but because man is so weak, and foolish, and unreflecting, that, in most cases, he acts without reason, by impulse or by passion, and embraces the present pleasure, or gratifies the existing emotion, or yields to the seductions of a prevailing passion, or the rude calls of sense, without any regard to consequences. The bulwarks of virtue, having once yielded to the attacks of pleasure, are broken down by this insidious enemy ; while the mind is led on, from step to step, till it plunges into all the depths and callousness of crime.

5. In our efforts towards perfection, there are many at all times disposed to ridicule every attempt to reach a standard beyond human attainment, as if we had as hope-

less and painful a task to perform as Sysipphus with his stone, or Ixion with his wheel. There are many who despise the disinterested and laudable exertions of the lover of knowledge, because they can see no substantial benefit follow as a reward ; and they are always inclined to discourage the lofty aspirations of the philosopher, as others are disposed to deprecate the efforts of men after the good. Those would rather take off the burden than put one on ; and they try to persuade us to make life easy and pleasant, making no attempts themselves beyond the mere negation of abstaining from evil.

Now, although the standard of Christian duty may be far beyond human reach, still it behoves us to come as nigh to it as we are able ; and when we see any one burdening himself with duties, practical virtues, or moral obligations ; or when we are so inclined to tax ourselves, let us not swerve nor discourage them, because some may look coldly on our zeal, or ridicule our exertions. The task may be great, may demand all our zeal and attention ; but let us not be put from it ; and if in any case we behold another struggling up the hill, or carrying a load which can hardly be borne, let us charitably act the part of the Samaritan, and lend him our aid and countenance.

6. Again, when we find a good and humble spirit, full of zeal and simplicity, toiling after what is good ; sacrificing much for the acquisition of this great object ; exposing himself, as Paul did, to perils by land and perils by sea, for the good cause he has at heart ; robbing himself of pleasure and ease for virtue's sake, let us not in an evil hour disburden him by any allurements or seduction ; or, by adulation, engender in his mind any feelings of self-love or self-applause, as if he had done all that could be

required of him ; for nothing is so dangerous, in the practice of virtue, as self-righteousness, or the complacency of mind caused by the flattery of mankind. It often happens that we find, in religious characters, a degree of overweening conceit not consistent with their profession, which at length leads to works of pure supererogation that terminate in extravagance or fanaticism. The cause of this rests in self-applause, or originates in the flattery of others ; who, through this weakness of our nature, find the readiest way to gain their ends.

7. Many live and die without leaving any trace or memorial of their existence. They go out like a lamp and are no more heard of. The earth closes upon them and they are forgotten, as if they had never been.\* While they lived they may have done no evil ; but not one single act of goodness can be attributed to them. They would take no burden on themselves in the smallest things ; nor would they suffer others to put a burden on them, as if life were a mere negation, in which a man is not called upon to do good or to practise virtue. But happily there are others, truly god-like, who, even with every enticement to pamper themselves, and with every seduction to selfishness and ease, devote their whole life to the good of their fellow-creatures, and are ever active in the cause of charity and benevolence, hardly knowing what it is to be at peace till death snatches them away. Such characters command the love and admiration of men ; because nothing is so rare as self-denial and disinterestedness ; nothing so common as selfishness.

\* " Some when they die, die all ; their mould'ring clay,  
Is but an emblem of their memories.  
The space quite closes up thro' which they pass'd."

ON THE PASSION OF REVENGE; THE VIRTUE OF  
FORTITUDE; AND ON DUELLING.

~~~~~  
Symbol XVIII.—*Ne erythimum edito.*
Eat not the gurnet.
~~~~~

1. IN that celebrated city of politeness and learning—Athens; the glory of the world; seat of arts; of literature; of refinement; safeguard of liberty; home of patriotism; whose wisdom and learning, and bright examples of all that is great and good, still affect the taste, and influence the thoughts of men—the art of solving enigmas was a proof of a liberal education. Athenæus relates, that it was customary to impose a certain penalty on those who failed in the solution of an enigma; which penalty was to drink a goblet of wine. But we are not told whether this was to stimulate the faculty concerned in the process, or to act as an oblivious draught wherein to drown the shame, or to forget the misfortune.

We deem this a proper occasion to throw out these hints, that we may recall the reader's mind to our own success in the art of unriddling mysteries, and solving enigmas. Though the attic penalty of failure be in our estimation no penalty at all, but an encouragement to

greater exertion, we rather covet the compliment offered to success.

2. For reasons unknown, it is said the *gurnet* was an emblem of blood ; and, it is inferred, the symbol signifies that we ought to avoid the passion of revenge, and on no occasion shed the blood of a fellow-creature. Be it right, or be it wrong, the injunction is an excellent one, and truly moral, and more truly Christian. In that religion no passion of our nature is more repudiated, than revenge and hatred to our enemies. If we are there commanded to forgive and love our enemies, and do them good, and bless them, surely the desire of revenge can in no way be consistent with such a divine and exalted state of feeling, as conduces to that end. But even in a less sublime sense, if we examine the nature of this passion in relation to man's moral and social condition in society, we shall find common sense and right reason to enforce upon us the evils attending such passions, not only to others, but chiefly to ourselves. For revenge, or the desire of revenge, unlike the *furor brevis*, or short madness of anger, has not a temporary effect, exploding on its object and there ending ; but continues to irritate the temper, and rankle in the soul. Not only is it anger, protracted hatred, always effervescing and smouldering in the breast ; but it is hatred " nursed to keep it warm," united to a vehement desire of injuring the object of it. With such a " serpent in our bosom," how can we hope for happiness or peace of mind ? The passion of revenge, like some other passions, is blind to the consequences ; it overrules the reason, and rules supreme over the will ; it acts by its own innate force, instinct, or determination ; and pants for relief or satisfaction without any prospective view of the evil or the good

that may ensue. Therefore it seems to centre in itself ; act of itself ; judge for itself, without appeal or deference to what may be called the constituted authorities of the mind—reason and judgment ; whose high office is to curb, direct, and overrule the passions, desires, and appetites of men. Whether, then, shall we choose to be the victims of passion, hurried on in a blind course of action, or the servants of the reason and judgment ?

3. Revenge is called by Bacon a kind of wild justice. It is a strong passion in all barbarous countries, where each individual is, of necessity, judge and executioner in one. Though in some cases justice may be on the side of revenge, how can it be always insured ? He who judges and punishes, at the same time keeping strictly to the rule of justice, possesses more calmness of temper than we can rationally attribute to ignorant and barbarous men. If the revenger inflicts a penalty more severe than the offence he has received, he acts unjustly ; and this will often be the case, because, according to the definition of revenge, it does not wait calmly, and deliberate on the amount of punishment due to an offence, but acts without forethought or reason. The motive is really what constitutes the guilt of an offender ; the offence may be one of pure accident ; the offender, therefore, innocent of the wish to injure ; but revenge, quick, rash, and resolute in its nature, draws no such refined distinctions. Among barbarous people the offence is estimated by the injury, and the punishment speedily follows, without regard to any considerations that would weigh with men in a more civilized state.

4. Revenge is often inspired by a false or pretended courage. Man easier bears the charge of want of virtue, than want of courage. He might not have the power to



control one single passion of his nature, and would, therefore, be weak and cowardly, in the highest sense ; yet he would rather die than not revenge an insult, dreading, as worse than death, to be ranked among cowards. This leads us briefly to analyse the virtue called courage, and thereby clear up some discrepancies that exist, which require to be examined and explained. There is moral courage, or fortitude ; and physical courage. The one is an admirable virtue, pure, exalted, self-denying ; to be found in magnanimous minds only ; the other is not entitled to the name of virtue, depending as much on physical properties as mental attributes. The courageous man, bold and self-possessed in the field of battle, unflinching in the most trying scenes of warfare, shall often be found a mere child in enduring any of the misfortunes or hardships of life. Under disease, or amid any of the numberless inflictions of Providence, he shall often be found hasty, impatient, melancholy, and desponding. In moral courage or fortitude—the passive enduring virtue—a weak man without courage, or a weaker woman, who would faint at the sight of blood, or swoon at any tale of horror, will bear patiently, and without a murmur, what would appal the boldest and stoutest soldier.

The man of true courage is he who makes a conquest of himself ; having attained a triumph, not exceeded in intrinsic value by the most memorable triumph of military life, he has proved his moral courage, and in every situation will act agreeably to his character. Another, called courageous, shall fail in these particulars, because, possessing physical, he may have no moral courage. Boldness is often confounded with courage ; rashness often mistaken for bravery ; we shall have as much bravery in the com-

mon soldier as in the general, and often there is more ; but when opportunities arise for displaying their characteristic qualities, the bravery of the general shall be found, not simply as in the soldier, but mixed with great moral courage or fortitude.

Fortitude is a calm, peaceable virtue ; enduring, forbearing, reflecting ; it never desponds, or sinks into despair, but is full of cheerfulness and hope ; sees gleams of sunshine in the bellowing storm ; and marks the finger of goodness and mercy in all ; rises above adversity, and is superior to every trial and affliction. Courage, on the contrary, is rash, bold, headlong, impetuous ; partaking more of instinct than reason ; more of passion than virtue ; rather of the body than the soul ; material more than spiritual ; inspiring, exciting, and elevating ; but blind and thoughtless.

5. " It is the glory of a man to pass by an offence." More blessed to forgive than to revenge. All may revenge ; but few are magnanimous enough to forgive. " In taking revenge," says Bacon, " a man is but even with his enemy ; but in passing it over he is superior." Wherefore superior ? Because he makes a conquest of himself. Still the world, or great leviathan, judges not like a philosopher. In its estimation, though the community call itself Christian, that man is a coward, and, therefore, a despicable, ignoble thing, who takes upon himself the glory of passing by an offence. But the one who will string his nerves ; inflate himself with a temporary fever ; and revenge his wrong, is applauded and received.

6. Men are not satisfied with those rules of life and manners laid down in the Christian religion ; but have extracted from the code of barbarous antiquity some other

laws, which, although contrary to the spirit of that religion, are considered necessary in deciding quarrels and disputes between one another. In that code, to pass by an offence is not glory, but a mean, cowardly act, of which, whosoever is guilty, is considered worthy of expulsion from society. The penalties are exorbitant, and most unjust; for a personal insult, the law demands the blood, if not the life, of the offender.

Another absurd and ridiculous part of the custom is, that the innocent may fall, while the guilty may escape. Therefore, the ends of justice are defeated. It is indeed a marvel how reasonable beings can be brought to countenance such irrational customs. In abstracting a leaf from the code of a barbarous age, the Law of Honour has been chosen to regulate the manners of the world; but the pagan, or superstitious, basis upon which that law was founded, has been carefully rejected: that being the only excuse or palliation for a custom so utterly contemptible. So that, in truth, the borrowers are more despicable than those from whom they borrow. Former ages erred on a point of superstition; we, repudiating the superstition, rush headlong into the custom founded upon it.

7. Duelling, or single combat, was originally a kind of ordeal, or trial of virtue, in which Providence was supposed to interfere, and award the verdict to the innocent. In this belief, strength of body or skill, or experience, was supposed to have no power to decide the combat contrary to the decrees of heaven. The trial by ordeal was a common mode of testing the guilt or the innocence of persons. Its results were believed to be of divine authority, because the decision of the trial was believed to be effected through

the interference of Providence. This superstition ramified into various divisions, till an accident could hardly happen to a man without being imputed to some secret guilt which God took this way of avenging. When the Cretans beheld a serpent fix itself on Saint Paul, they instantly called out, "he is a murderer;" but so soon as they saw he escaped the ordeal uninjured, they as quickly changed their tone, and exclaimed, "he is a god!"

So long as men believed the battle to be decided by heaven, free and independent of human interposition, there was some reason and consistency in duelling, or single combat; but now that we reject the superstition, how ridiculous is it that we should still continue the practice?

8. As men satisfy their revenge in the duel, women are said to gratify their desire by slander and backbiting. They are more alive to the feeling of envy than men, and the occasions of calling up their desire of revenge are, perhaps, more numerous. In this respect they are far more ready and subtle than men; as we may find proof in the biting words of Medea, who says,—

" Nature formed our sex to good  
Of slight capacity, but to revenge  
Of ready and inventive subtlety."

But if women are revengeful (with whom it is more a weakness than a passion), they are capable of greater fortitude and patience under suffering than men. The pains of childbirth are heroically borne by them, though Medea says,—

" Thrice would I stand in arms  
On the rough edge of battle, ere once bear  
The pangs of childbirth."

If their fortitude is remarkable, so are the many instances of their constancy and resolution. What man can surpass the heroism and constancy of Tamlane's mistress, who held her lover fast, though he was changed successively into fire, water, red-hot iron, and a roaring lion, by fairies?

ON THE VIRTUE OF MERCY OR COMPASSION ; THE  
THEORY AND PRACTICE OF RELIGION CONTRAST-  
ED ; ANCIENT MORALISTS AND MODERN CHRIS-  
TIAN COMPARED.

~~~~~  
Symbol XIX.—Colubrum intra aedes collapsum ne perimito.

Kill not the serpent that chances to fall within your walls.
~~~~~

1. THIS is an excellent and exalted precept, coming from the lips of a heathen philosopher. It is only excelled by the divine injunctions of our Lord and Saviour, in which he commands his disciples to forgive and love their enemies. It inculcates the impropriety of making our houses the arena of strife and enmity ; enforces the duty of shewing mercy to our enemies, when they throw themselves within our power, when they become suppliants, or when accident makes them guests at our table. To man is given the noble prerogative of reason ; to man alone is given the desire of friendship, the fellow-feeling of humanity, the sweet emotions of tender mercy ; which exalt him far above the brute creation ; who, acting upon mere instinct, are ready always to destroy the intruder, or tear in pieces the enemy that falls within their walls, even though belonging to the same species. Compassion is a virtue unknown to them.

2. It is more blessed to forgive than to revenge. The

injury our enemies may do can never exceed the limit of our forgiveness. So says the religion of Christ. If our enemy fall into our power by accident, having lost all means of defence, neither morals, nor the common feelings of humanity, can justify the exercise of cruelty or revenge. He would justly be called a coward who should be guilty of striking an enemy without the means of defence. Besides, the fact of his coming within our walls, or appearing helplessly at our feet, should soften our wrath, and inspire rather a desire for reconciliation, than a wish for revenge. When any animal is seen to abandon its instinct of fear for man, and suddenly, in a particular emergency, to throw itself upon his mercy, his pity, or protection, who, but an animal lower in degree, though boasting of reason, would refuse it the kindly feelings of our nature, and kill it, or drive it away? When, in the depth of winter, birds, exhausted with cold and hunger, ask us for food, and throw themselves within our power, who but a monster would take advantage of them, and abuse that power? Those, having the god-like virtue of tender mercy, would shed a tear while they supplied their wants.

3. Many have doubted whether man has the right (for no one questions his power) to kill any animals except those necessary for food. The Pythagoreans disputed even this right, as they could see no necessity in man to live upon the flesh of animals; while, at the same time, they considered every creature in nature had the same right to enjoy the existence the Creator had given it, as man himself. This is a plausible argument; but the same nature or God they appeal to, has overturned the basis of the argument, in the habits and practice of the lower animals, who live upon animal food. In them instinct is the

fiat or the will of the Almighty ; and is not liable to the corruption or change to which the reason and life of man is liable.

4. There can be, therefore, nothing actually wrong in the destruction of any animal, provided we have a good motive, or a justification, for its death. God has placed them all within our power ; he has given to man the power of life and death over them ; and for the proper exercise of this power we must be, in some sort, responsible. The exercise of reason, and the good feelings implanted in us, are presumed to be sufficient guides. To destroy the serpent that falls by chance within our power, is a violation of feeling ; to exercise our power in torment or cruelty is an act repudiated by religion and morality. He who can be cruel to a creature that cannot help itself, is worse than a savage. He it is who merits the death, and not the poor animal he causelessly torments.

5. The symbol considered in a religious point of view, may be illustrated in a still loftier tone than we have used. With Christ, we may say, if we forgive not men, how can we hope God to forgive us ? The offence any enemy can give man, is not to be compared with the offences man is daily guilty of to God. We are always within his power ; by a word of his mouth he can destroy us ; by the fiat of his will he can afflict us with evils worse than death ; and yet do we not find him of tender mercy and long-suffering ? We are all astonished how long his mercy does endure (for who is there that feels not the pang of remorse, the innate consciousness of guilt ?) ; and surely that attribute so glorious in Him cannot but be pleasing in man, though the mere shadow, the imitation, the adumbration, of the celestial virtue ! The glorious Image of that Being brought



down the virtue of mercy from heaven, and in his own life and example placed it nearer to the eye of man. Mercy and compassion flowed from him, emanated from him, as light from the sun ; they were part of his divinity ; they were inseparable from his nature ; they operated not as in man, by passion or instinct, or by impulse of feeling ; but they were spontaneous energies of his super-essential nature. If he said, as we find he did say, that the merciful were blessed, and that in return they would obtain mercy, then it behoves every one of his disciples to shew forth mercy.

6. Would to God the disciples of the divine Master were found as zealous and obedient as the followers of the human ! Would to God the precepts of Christ had one tithe of the influence over Christians that the precepts of our philosopher had over his disciples ! Would to God all Christians, nominal and professional, adhered as strictly to the demands of their religion, as the school of Pythagoras did to his doctrines ! Then we should have a jubilee in all the earth. Christ would have his due, and no one earth-born could stand before him. The dim attempts at human perfection by the greatest of woman-born, would fade into nothingness before the real brightness of divine truth and celestial light. Those glittering stars which threw a dim halo round the midnight darkness of ancient times, would be for ever eclipsed ; they would succumb, in reverential awe and thankfulness, to the Sun of modern times. Those great minds who, from time to time, displayed the majesty of human intellect, sometimes in humility, sometimes with arrogance, would all, as if by inherent impulse of conviction, bend to the power and supremacy of the *λογος* of God.

7. But strange to say—and it is with humiliation as well as surprise we make the remark—the religion of Christ, as a system of morals, is less strictly adhered to by its professed devotees than any mere human system of antiquity, and by far less than any of the false religions of present times. The Hindoo and Mahometan display more zeal and enthusiasm, while they practise up to the very letter of the law. So in the systems of ancient philosophers, which demanded great self-denial; exacted much opposed to the pursuit of pleasure; and withdrew their adherents from the alluring delights of sense and corporeal pleasure (all-powerful in a state of nature), there was an obedience and strictness truly wonderful.

8. We have indeed the primitive beauty and simplicity of that religion still taught (for the records happily exist); we have the moral lessons and precepts of Christ still inculcated in all their purity, and with all their force (for they cannot be obscured or perverted); but if we compare with these the actual practice of Christianity, by individuals, and the institutions formed to maintain and promulgate that religion, we must lament, as we cannot but confess, the great discordance. What was originally pure and simple has, in the hands of man, become highly artificial and complex.

9. Those who utterly fail in acting up to the spirit of their religion, are nevertheless most ready and zealous in declaring its truth, and the sublime perfection of its moral code, as if the practice were not intended to assimilate to the doctrines. Their opinion is just and true, but their conduct inexplicable. Eager as they are to applaud the religion of Christ (which they do not follow), they are as eager and fervent in the condemnation and contempt of

other systems of human origin which their disciples strictly acted up to. What is divine has less real power than what was human. Sanctions of little authority were more binding than divine ones. The will of man more respected than the will of God.

Those partisans of religion should consider, in their contrasts and comparisons—in their applause of Christ and contempt of others, that the very admission of a divine origination makes the comparison an unjust one. We may fairly contrast human system with human system—man with man; but we should not compare divine with human, man with God, for the purpose of throwing ridicule on, and exciting contempt against, the efforts of man to reach perfection.

Those attempts we hallow: the names of those great and lofty minds—Pythagoras, Plato, Socrates, Zeno, Epicurus, and others—we deeply reverence: they, in the twilight of natural reason, searched for eternal truth; through the gloom of ignorance, and the greater gloom of superstition, they penetrated till they beheld the light of wisdom reflected from the concave of heaven. The more they pierced through the chaos, the more became visible. The rays of light and truth which they collected are still existing—men have preserved them as treasures of natural reason; and to us, who are blessed with revelation, their purity and brightness appear wonderful.

In truth so pure and bright, that Pythagoras and Plato have been compared with Christ, even by zealous Christians. We have no reason to believe that a revelation was made to Plato; but some of his Christian admirers have asserted as much, so divine and perfect was his doctrine then considered.

In the undue elevation of Plato there is clearly more zeal than discretion ; for though his merit be undoubted, it is no more than empty adulation and blind zeal, which would make any one compare his writings or doctrines with the doctrines of the Christian religion.

## ON BENEVOLENCE.

~~~~~  
Symbol XX.—*Panem ne frangito.*
Never break the bread.
 ~~~~~

1. "THIS symbol," observes Dacier, "has been explained very differently ; some thinking Pythagoras meant we should not tear one's life to pieces, by employing ourselves in several things which tend not to the same end ; others, again, that herein he exhorts to unity and concord ; but in the explication of symbols, the proper and figurative sense ought to agree, and hold together, and none will deny that bread is made to be broken. I am persuaded that, by this precept, Pythagoras intended to reprove the avarice which is but too frequent in most of the charities men give. Anciently bread was made in such a manner, that each loaf was divided into four, by lines that were drawn across it, before it was put in the oven. For this reason the Greeks called it *τετραγυρον*, and the Romans *quadra*. When they gave it to the poor, they usually broke the bread, and gave one of the quarters, and sometimes half of it, as we see in Horace,

' Et mihi dividuo findetur munere quadra.'

Thus to cut down avarice, root and branch, Pythagoras advised by this symbol, not to break the bread, but rather

to give the whole loaf; and to this purpose Solomon says in Ecclesiastes, *Cast thy bread upon the running waters*, meaning that we should give to all the poor without distinction, &c."

2. Charity is a noble, divine virtue, having more of heavenly beauty than any other known among men; and, like other virtues, there is attached to its exercise a pleasure beyond all description. It is the reflex image of our Maker on the soul, and, beyond any other, shadows forth that likeness to God in which man was originally created. It is beautiful and perfect, because it is free from selfishness; for all virtues are more or less excellent in proportion as they are distinguished by self-denial and disinterestedness. "True charity," says Barrow, in language full of expression and eloquence, "is the imitation and copy of that immense love, which is the fountain of all being, and all good; which made all things, which preserveth the world, which sustaineth every creature. \* \* \* Nothing is more admirable, more venerable, even in the common eye and opinion of men; it hath in it a beauty and a majesty to ravish every heart; even a spark of it, in generosity of dealing, breedeth admiration; a glimpse of it, in formal courtesy of behaviour, procureth much esteem; being deemed to accomplish and adorn a man." It is the overflowing of the innate goodness of the soul, and, when genuine and sincere, its loftiest aspirations are for the good and well-being of man. It is an active virtue, ever prompting the possessor to exercise it in all conditions of life. It does not slumber, and awake again, as if by influence of external circumstances, or from caprice or changeableness; but it is ever vigilant, always desiring to be gratified. It is not displayed only in giving to the

poor, in relieving distress, or in any of all its manifold functions, with regard to the miseries of our fellow-creatures; but it breathes the sigh of sympathy and compassion, of love and tenderness, to every living thing; and turns not away because man is criminal, or an outcast, or of a different creed from ourselves. It is a philanthropic, and therefore an universal virtue. No object is too abject or too mean for its capacious bounty; no human being, however bad, is beneath its notice; none beyond the limits of its love and sympathy.

3. As we have said, in the exercise of charity there is a pleasure beyond all description, so heavenly and pure is it; there is a satisfaction that partakes more of heaven than of earth,—a satisfaction rather god-like than human. But this exquisite pleasure, the reward of the good, is, by our customs (perhaps necessary) of supporting institutions, and not relieving in person the individual, debarred from the great majority of our fellow-men.

The stream of their bounty runs copiously, indeed (and we honour them for it), but it runs and diverges into channels of which they have no cognisance; and what they give to the general fund is disposed of, divided, and dispersed by others, who have as little satisfaction in its bountiful grant as they. A man, we are sure, shall enjoy more true satisfaction in relieving the distresses of one person, than he can have from all the charitable institutions added together, though he give to them his thousands instead of tens. Charity is essentially a personal, individual virtue, and, therefore, cannot be exercised through the medium of others; because to give is not necessarily a charitable act, unless we lower the majesty and nobleness of the vir-

tue to common and vulgar acceptation, in which the purity of the motive is not considered.

3. In the highest, or Scriptural sense, charity means love, universal love,—love to God, and good will towards men. In its more restricted sense, it comprehends two main branches, separating, as it were, at one point, but converging again at another; which point is centred in mankind. One branch is synonymous with benevolence, or giving alms to the poor; the other is the indwelling sense of love to all mankind; viewing men in a charitable light; putting the best construction on all their actions; having a fellow-feeling and affectionate tenderness for every thing human; and in all respects revering rather than contemning the species to which we belong.

The sense of benevolence to the needy and afflicted is the one comprised in the symbol; and to it we shall direct what follows.

5. The benevolent emotions are peculiar to man; we find no vestige of them in the lower animals. We may be sure they were not given to him by his Creator without design. The manifest purpose intended by them is the well-being of the race; and he who does not call them forth, cultivate, and exercise them to that extent, fails to fulfil the designs of his creation. The unequal distribution of property was, no doubt, also intended to be in some degree compensated by the exercise of benevolence. We may conceive this to be an unalienable condition attached to the tenure of property; for let no man imagine that what he possesses and enjoys is his by any indefeasible right; he is bound by laws divine and human to make his riches or possessions subserve the purposes of



others' happiness besides his own. The human law may exact contributions for the maintenance of the poor, but it is the divine or moral law only which can make us charitable and benevolent. What we are compelled to give is no necessary act of benevolence, which must be spontaneous and heartfelt to be genuine. The very essence of charity, therefore, consists in the motive which influences us, and not in the amount bestowed, or in the frequency of our almsgiving. Though we judge of man by the outward expression of his actions (proof of our limited powers of judgment), it is not so with God, who values an action by the good or evil motive from whence it springs.

6. From the opinions and conduct of men, one might imagine charity or benevolence to be a mere feeling or emotion of the heart, depending for its existence on the inborn goodness of human nature; and for its exercise on the prevalence of the feeling, or in proportion to the number of objects claiming their bounty. It would seem, also, that men are fully justified in gratifying every prompting or call of their benevolent emotions; as we find them praised in proportion to the number of their acts of charity, but without reference to the principle which guided them, or the consequences which followed. Some grovelling moralists have resolved all the benevolent emotions into selfishness, because the result or end terminates in the gratification connected with the exercise of those emotions. There would be much truth in this mortifying theory of morals, were we to concede the point of charity and benevolence not being principles in their genuine sense, instead of mere emotions or feelings of our nature.

7. Every evil, as well as every good passion or emotion, exists for wise and useful purposes. They are all intend-

ed to be under the guidance and control of the reason and judgment. If they are allowed blindly to act by their own dim, dangerous, uncertain light, the evil passions shall make us their slaves, and the good emotions become mere weaknesses. Thus it is that generosity may be a vice, and benevolence become the instrument of misery and unhappiness. We must not only be charitable, but charitable at the right season, and to proper objects; or that gracious virtue is a mere cloak for selfish gratification, without reference to the wisdom which ought to guide its exercise.

The indulgence of our benevolent feelings, without reflecting on the results, as regards the well-being of man, partakes of the same weakness incidental to the reckless gratification of any other passion; for our best passions become evil, if inordinately gratified, or gratified at the expense of others' happiness. Benevolence is only divine, only perfect, when allied with wisdom, as we believe it to be in God; though many seem to think the goodness and benevolence of the Supreme to partake of the character of those virtues so highly applauded among men, namely, the result of feeling, rather than a principle eternally existing, depending upon no feeling or passion, but springing out of eternal wisdom.

8. It will appear, then, that benevolence in the world, as exercised by mankind, partakes too much of feeling, and too little of wisdom. When the emotion exists, the only justification given for its exercise is the call of nature. And in what does this differ from the gratification of any other emotion or passion? In such cases, it is rather a weakness than a virtue; and when exercised to indulge the feeling only, and without any reference to principle or ulti-

mate consequences, it cannot be called either virtuous or meritorious.

9. We are inclined to believe that many under the influence of such excellent emotions, who make a figure in the world on account of their charitable gifts,—who are applauded by their fellows as patterns of goodness, of benevolence, of charity,—are without any vestige of wisdom, or any principle in the conduct they pursue. All their benevolence originates in, and acts from, feeling alone; and thus their actions are generally characterized by weakness, want of foresight, and systematic rule. So that their bountiful offerings, if they do any good, fail in reaping those desirable results which we might naturally expect from them. This is true, also, of many over-zealous in religious things, who prostitute religion to the purposes of feeling and passion; act as if it were not a principle; and speak of God in such terms as if he were a Being with passions, sentiments, and emotions, of the same character as those in men, only far more exalted and refined. With regard to moral actions, such a view as we have stated makes bad morality, false religion, and debased ideas of the being of God.

Benevolence is not good because it is pleasurable; it is good because it is beneficial to mankind. That is its great end. The pleasure attached to its exercise may be called an accident, and not a necessary connection; for the purpose of stimulating us to good actions, and giving a personal interest in what tends to the happiness and wellbeing of our fellow-creatures.

10. These remarks, and the distinction drawn between benevolence as a feeling or emotion, and benevolence as a heavenly and wise principle of action, will explain the

many caprices, inconsistencies, and follies to be observed in the apostles of charity. With them, what is a weakness in others becomes a kind of disease. Their benevolence, like an artificial taste or appetite, is unnatural. They care not for the ordinary and every-day stimulants to good works ; they demand provocatives, highly seasoned, with exaggerated descriptions and absurd declamation. Place before them the every-day subjects of *our* poor, and uneducated, and irreligious population, and we scarcely ruffle their souls ; but diverge from this beaten track, and expatiate on the heathen darkness of some distant land, the sufferings of the negro, the heathenism of the Hottentot, the dangerous state of an Indian's soul, and wonderful shall be the effect. For the tens given for behoof of our unfortunate countrymen, thousands will flow in, to bear witness to the tender chord of sympathy which we have touched.

Wisdom and justice demand that we should begin at home with our charity, and so improve, exalt, and moralize our own population (long left in the darkness of ignorance), as not to make them objects of pity and commiseration. When we have done this, and can regard the effects of our benevolence with pleasure, we may then be justified in devoting our surplus means to the improvement and religious education of other people, but not before.

The plea that those who now give for foreign and distant objects would abridge their contributions, or refuse altogether, if they were called upon to exercise their benevolent feelings nearer home—at their very doors—is one we cannot but despise and abhor. That this unhealthy feeling does exist to a great extent, cannot be denied ; which will confirm all we have said on the usefulness of

benevolence to the individual, as a mere emotion of the mind.

NOTE.—If we found a mother to love other children not her own, to the exclusion of her own offspring, and heap upon them blessings and benefits at the expense of those who had the better claim, we should say, without hesitation, that she was an unnatural parent. This is precisely the fault we are daily guilty of, in our neglect of our own population, and their consequent ignorance, and our warmth and zeal in favour of *foreign* objects, with whom we cannot, with any reason, have the same sympathy. So long as gross and extensive ignorance belongs to our population, all benevolent offerings given for other purposes are, in our estimation, wrong.

From the vast number of societies that claim our charity (for foreign objects), we are satisfied that the funds collected and distributed do not obtain half the good result they would do, if they were dispensed with a wise economy, and with concentrated force. They are frittered away in the multiplicity of objects. The means, too, are generally far inadequate to the ends in view : a sure mark of folly.

The truth is, we want *wisdom* in our charitable societies. There is great zeal, but very little discretion. To collect money is the primary object ; the best way of laying out the gift is not only secondary, but, in most cases, overlooked.

Yet if a man were, from conscientious motives, to object to open his purse to the advancement of any *foreign* object, till such time as his own countrymen were elevated in the scale of existence, and be an honour instead of a reproach, in all probability he would have the epithets cast in his face, of "heathen and publican."

ON SLANDER.

~~~~~  
Symbol XXX.—*Gladium acutum avertito.*
Avoid the two-edged sword.
~~~~~

THAT is to say, “ We ought not to hold any conversation with slanderers, for the two-edged sword has always been the emblem of satirical and slanderous tongues ; as we see in the Psalms of David, where it is said, *Their tongue is as a sharp sword*; and elsewhere, *Their tongue is like a two-edged sword*, and *They have whet their tongues like a sword*.”

1. Cowardice is contemptible among men. He who beats a disgraceful retreat, or flees before the face of an enemy, less strong than himself, is called a coward. He is ridiculed and despised. Yet there may be found reasons for mitigating our condemnation. Where there is want of physical courage, there may be no want of moral rectitude. Even where we find a lack of moral courage, it may be a weakness, not a crime. The object may call forth our pity, but not our hatred. He may even be despicable in the want of it, but we are bound to shew him Christian charity.

The man, however, who has not the physical courage to face his enemy (and who has hence no opportunity to re-

treat or flee before him), but who has the moral baseness to stab him in the dark, is guilty of a crime deserving of no pity. He displays in his character the very lowest species of cowardice. The hired assassin is even to be preferred to him.

2. The slanderer is guilty of that crime. He stabs in the dark the character or reputation of his neighbour; by disseminating false and calumnious reports against his fair fame, he may, in some cases, do a more lasting injury than if he committed murder on his person. Where no such treatment is deserved, and where slander destroys the peace of the individual, and scatters misery and discord in families, the agent of all this unhappiness is not less than a demon in human garb; for we attribute to the devils alone delight in human misery.

The slanderer and scandal-monger find many to countenance them in the world. There is a secret satisfaction when they discover a flaw in the character of a friend. And it may be said, we are all too prone to believe rather than reject calumny. According to the poet,—

“ There is a lust in man no charm can tame,  
Of loudly publishing his neighbour's shame;  
On eagle wings immortal scandals fly,  
While virtuous actions are but born and die.”

3. As it may be said, the devil has more pleasure in the fall of a man perfect before God; so we may presume of the slanderer, that there is more real satisfaction when he succeeds in defaming the character of one of fair fame and unspotted virtue. In both cases, in the case of the devil and his *angel*, the slanderer, they are works of some difficulty; demanding more ingenuity and perseverance; and we may suppose the pleasure to be proportionate.

As it is the devil's business to go about seeking whom he may devour, he is pleased, no doubt, to see agents spontaneously and voluntarily springing up to do his work, and increase the number of his victims. And when he discovers that many of them are outwardly very good Christians, professedly pious, and ostensibly charitable (as their names to every charity testifies), his satisfaction must be great indeed. We are all apt to express our horror at the havoc of the evil one in the world; but his triumph would be less did he receive less encouragement: what can we expect when men are found willingly to enlist themselves in his service?

4. He who wields the double-edged sword, ought to have prudence and caution, for, fortunately, it cuts both ways. But he who uses the sword, cannot always be on his guard. He cannot always escape. Though like Achilles, he may be invulnerable at all points save one, a Paris will arise to sling his arrow at the fatal spot.

When once detected, he shall be like a wasp in a hive of bees, or, like a wingless hawk among fowls. He shall be stung by all, and no mercy will be shewn him. His poisoned arrows shall avail him nothing against the stings of anger, hatred, and reproach. Fortunate will he be, if he escape the fate of Orpheus among the women of Thrace; or the fate of Adonis, torn to pieces by the animal he delighted to hunt.



## ON SATIRE.

~~~~~  
Symbol XXII.—*Dentes ne frangito.*
Break not the teeth.
 ~~~~~

1. Dacier remarks on this symbol, "The Greeks used the expression to *break the teeth*, in the same sense the Latins did *genuinum frangere*, and *dentem rodere*, to revile bitterly, or to make satires." Both are the effects of malice; both are personal; both contemptible passions, which we are called upon to avoid. The reader will have perceived, before reaching so far, how sparing we have been of satire in these our disquisitions. In truth, the benignity of philosophy has rooted out all the thorns that flesh is heir to; and we would rather bring men to goodness, by precept and persuasion, than by force of abuse and ridicule. If we have stung at all, it is the sting of the bee and not of the wasp; for sweet honey and gentle emollients are mingled with our gall and wormwood. The Esculapian prescriptions we give are not forbidding to the taste.

We are certain the medicine we have offered is as wholesome to the soul as any Esculapius could give for the health of the body. He has only to read, read again, and digest, to find himself a wiser and better man. If we

have in any case been harsh or severe, it is without reference to individuals. We attack the sin, but not the sinner.\* Truth and morality are the ends we have in view. The welfare of man ; the amelioration of mankind the object.

“ When satire flies abroad on falsehood’s wing,  
Short is her life, and impotent her sting:  
But when to truth allied, the wound she gives  
Sinks deep, and to remotest ages lives.”

2. Satire is likened by Swift to a sort of glass, wherein beholders generally discover every body’s face but their own ; which, he observes, is the chief reason for that kind of reception it meets with in the world, and that so very few are offended with it. By the erudite Theodosius Grotavus, it is compared to power in the hands of man,—a dangerous weapon, more likely to be abused than temperately and judiciously employed. “ They be evils in the world let loose to torment men ; and for our peace and safety, we must needs fetter and bind them as we do wild beasts ; but when tamed and subdued, they be wholesome and useful.”

3. Satire in its worst sense, or bitter reviling, arising from a morbid temperament, or ill nature, may be compared to the deadly or poisonous slime exuded by some animals, by which they warily catch and destroy their prey. The object of it is entirely personal ; its purpose to injure, or blast the reputation of him whom it attacks. It is not bold or open, but secret and cowardly ; it attacks not face to face, but carries on its warfare behind our backs ; and, in a word, stabs in the dark like the vilest assassin.

\* “ A just man hateth the evil, but not the evil-doer.”—SYDNEY.

4. In the highest sense, it has often been an instrument for promoting morality; because it discourages vice, and attacks not individuals. When judiciously employed in a good cause—in the condemnation of vice and folly, and exposure of errors and corrupt manners—it has proved a powerful, and often a successful weapon. But to be successful, more than the mere disposition is required; the satirist must have great talents, a profound knowledge of human nature, and extensive experience of the world. To write a good satire, is, on this account, the most difficult of all compositions. The satires of Juvenal and a few others (for few have excelled), are works of great dignity, as well as power and expression. The authors rarely condescend to personal attacks, but sustain their subject by profound thoughts and extensive knowledge. Their satires are in truth moral essays; and in that light they have been regarded by mankind. But it is in attacking ridiculous customs, absurd fashions, and corrupt manners, that it is chiefly successful; for these cannot be reached so effectually by mere declamation or simple condemnation. Though a man were guilty of a breach of morals, he would hardly require proof or ridicule to expose his true position; for he is sensible of the error he has committed, though he may be careless or indifferent, and repeat the crime. But all the follies of men practised under customs, fashions, and such like, are too absurd and evanescent to treat of with the same gravity. They must be turned into ridicule, and held up to public scorn and derision. When a whole people practise any ridiculous custom, they are hardly sensible of the silly and contemptible exposure they are making, till the satirist comes forth “with a weapon

scarcely felt or seen," to hold up the mirror and reflect their doings.

5. There are many of the prejudices of men that cannot be attacked in any other way so successfully as by the keen edge of satire. Man may stand heroically against all the demonstrations of logic and reason, but there are few who are insensible to the effects of satire and ridicule. There are periods in history (as when Juvenal wrote), when all the landmarks of virtue and decency disappeared; when general profligacy became the prevailing fashion; when the still small voice of the moralist or philosopher was lost and neglected. In such awful scenes, the power of the satirist may be felt, when every other weapon is despised and disregarded. If religion has lost its influence, and general corruption prevails, of little use is the voice of the preacher. When public opinion, or at least the practice of the public, is but the echo and respondent of profligacy and crime, we cannot expect any good results from its voice. But when these and all other means fail, in recalling man to his duty, or calling up shame and remorse, the lash of satire, or power of ridicule, often succeeds. It cuts and penetrates, when all other weapons of regeneration would fail.

ON GRIEF AND MELANCHOLY :

*The Symbol mystically considered.*

~~~~~  
Symbol XXXI.—Cor non comedendum.

Eat not the heart.
~~~~~

1. THOSE sects of ancient philosophers who denied a future life, and the providence of God in the world ; while, at the same time, they inculcated a stoical indifference to the evils and privations that befall us here on earth, could only have had recourse to one reason for their professed apathy, namely, that what misfortunes befall us cannot be helped or recalled. In the loss of a wife, or child, or friend, we only suffer what all must suffer at one period or another ; and the best philosophy is calmly to acquiesce in the doom of fate or the law of nature, seeing no efforts of ours can save the one or the other. But does this specious philosophy afford any satisfaction to the human heart ? Is it not contrary to nature, and, therefore, false and deceptions ?

If any philosopher did really bring his mind to this insensibility (for all may profess doctrines they cannot act up to), we should naturally infer that it was a philosophy

which exalted the mind or intellect at the expense of all other faculties and emotions of man.

2. Pride, vanity, and arrogance, formed the foundation of this the Stoical philosophy—

“ O foolishness of men ! that lend their ears  
To those budge doctors of the stoic fur,  
And fetch their precepts from the Cynic tub,  
Praising the lean and sallow countenance”—

who, without hope in this world or the next, would teach man to forget his woes, and restrain his heart against the yearnings of grief and the despondency of melancholy. More rational than this was Epicurus, who taught men to make the most of this life here, as they had nothing to look for hereafter.

3. Wiser was Pythagoras, who, in this precept, does not teach a stupid and apathetic indifference to misfortune; but, as a Christian philosopher would do, requires us, as men not without hope, as reasonable creatures, to moderate our sorrow, and not consume our hearts in intemperate grief, or wasting melancholy. When carried to this extent it becomes a childish weakness, unworthy of us, and is properly a subject of contempt or commiseration. All evils that befall us, the best principles of philosophy and religion call upon us to endure them with fortitude and magnanimity; not, as the Stoics, altogether repressing the voice of nature, but moderating it according to reason and sound philosophy.

4. As we find grief a natural and universal passion of the human breast, we may be certain, *a priori*, that it was not given to man to be frittered away and dried up by the harsh, cold, and unfeeling rules of human philoso-

phy. Like all other passions of our nature, the merit or virtue is not in destroying, or rooting it out of the mind, but in wisely ruling and regulating it by the force of reason and religion.

Excessive grief at any loss or bereavement we can possibly suffer, is criminal in a high degree ; if so in a pagan, or in the judgment of a heathen philosopher, how much more sinful must it be in the conduct of a Christian ! He believes every event to be directed by the wisdom and good providence of God ; and, therefore, that which appears to him an irreparable loss, may, to a higher intelligence, be an act of grace and supreme goodness, in either removing the person he sorrows after to a better life, or as an admonition to prepare himself for the same stroke of fate.

To believe that God inflicts misfortune or evil with the same malevolence and passion attributed to some pagan deities, is what no Christian would admit ; not even he who was intemperately grieving for some stroke of affection just gone by. And this might shew to him more effectually than any proof or argument could do, that his intemperance in grief was not without sin.

5. To *eat the heart*, implies even a more criminal indulgence than we have supposed,—a desire to brood over misfortunes ; to magnify them ; and to find a kind of pleasure in reflecting on them. The evil may be as much as he can bear ; it may justify a degree of sorrow hardly admissible by a philosopher ; we may pity and condole with the sufferer, and pour consolation and healing balm into his wounds ; but if we discover that our efforts are fruitless and nugatory, because he delights in recalling to his mind perpetually the object of his sighs and groans ; probes the very wound we would have healed ; and seems to delight

in his sufferings by dwelling upon them, instead of banishing the cause from his thoughts, we can only turn away with pity and contempt.

6. In this degree grief is a mere selfish passion ; and, like all other selfish passions, is an enemy to benevolence ; to affection to our species ; and an enemy to the practice of virtue. The man of grief shuts up his heart from any sympathy with the world ; he would reduce all men around him to his own unhappy state ; and he cannot endure the smile of pleasure or the cheerful countenance. Moreover, intemperate grief not merely destroys or eats up the heart, but it likewise injures all the faculties of the mind. Its existence is a proof of contemptible weakness ; and we may be certain where we see it, the mind indulging it is fast degenerating into imbecility and fatuity. Better for all of us is it to love l'Allegro than Il Penseroso ; in life we shall discover much the same difference between cheerfulness and melancholy as between these two poems ; the former being so much more admirable and excellent in spirit than the latter.

7. So much for the *moral* interpretation of the precept ; there is also a *philosophical*, or, more truly, a *religious* or *mystical* meaning concealed under the symbol, upon which we must also offer a brief comment.

There is a story related by an Italian novelist of a jealous husband, who, to punish his wife for her infidelity, killed her lover and gave her his heart to eat. This being dressed up in an exquisite manner, and presented to her, was partaken of with pleasure and the greatest relish, as a morsel never before surpassed in flavour and delicacy. So far for the mere physical result : and, perhaps, she would have remained calmly in this belief, had not the



cruel husband called into existence a spiritual or metaphysical power that ultimately crushed and destroyed her. He told her of what the contents of the dish was composed—the cause of her crime and his death; the receptacle of those affections and passions that had subdued both; upon which the sweet morsel turned to loathed bitterness, and in the end madness and suicide closed the tragic scene.

This may afford to us an illustration of the mystical doctrine of the Pythagoreans. In a mere physical sense there was no more objection to eat the heart of an animal than any other part. But in a mystical or metaphysical, or, perhaps, religious view, there was an impropriety, inasmuch as the heart was believed to be the sacred repository of part of our spiritual being. Moreover, it was believed to be sometimes the *locum tenens* of the Deity himself.

8. The popular belief amongst men now, was an article of faith in the days of Pythagoras. The personality of man was divided into three parts, the head, the heart, and the rest of the body. In the head lodged the mind or intellect; and in the heart all the affections, passions, and desires, which, in the aggregate, were called the soul. The spiritual nature of man was imagined to be an emanation of the Deity, or soul of the world; and, therefore, in whichever portion of the human body this divine nature dwelt was supposed to become sacred, as a temple erected to God's worship is sanctified by his presence.

9. On this belief, however extravagant, was grounded the practice in using the heart of animals in sacrifices and burnt-offerings among ancient nations. It was conceived to be impressed; to have inscribed on it, in mysterious

characters, the divine oracles and decrees of fate. It was carefully scrutinized by sage and reverend soothsayers, and its *dictum* guided the course of the greatest warriors and statesmen. On it was legibly (to a priestly eye) inscribed the destiny of nations ; the fall of old and the rise of new kingdoms ; human events, yet unravelled in the womb of time, were seen in vivid succession, as a bud is seen in the unopened flower ; and on its predictions depended the success or failure of great actions. But now, says our greatest poet, in language full of music, and poetry truly divine,—

“ The oracles are dumb :  
No voice or hideous hum  
Runs through the arched roof in words deceiving ;  
Apollo from his shrine  
Can no more divine  
With hallow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving.  
No nightly trance, or breathed spell,  
Inspires the pale-eyed priest from the prophetic cell.”

10. Porphyry, one of the deepest of the mystic school, in a curious passage, has presented to us another use to which the hearts of animals may be turned. “ Experience,” says he, “ taught the theologists that a kindred body is attractive of soul. Hence those who wish to receive into themselves the souls of animals, gifted with a prophetic spirit, have only to eat the principal parts of them, as the *hearts* of crows, of moles, and of hawks.” In which it appears that this profound writer and philosopher soars far above our notions of the genuine Pythagorean philosophy, and inculcates the very thing the precept seems to forbid ; but the act may, perchance, become lawful and even laudable, when the motive and design are so good. He likewise makes it appear that this prophetic spirit is

not separated from the heart at the death of the animal ; for, if it were so, his prescription could be of no avail.

In this manner a man might proceed to make up some of the defects or omissions of nature in himself, either by deriving something from the heart peculiar to the animal, or by selecting the head or brains of such creatures as are wiser than himself.

ON CHEERFULNESS, AND SOURNESS OF TEMPER.

~~~~~  
Symbol XXIV.—*Acetarium vas abs te removeto.*

Remove the vinegar cruet far from you.
~~~~~

1. It cannot be denied there are some who, by nature or constitution, possess such an acidity of temper as to make them unbearable even to their nearest relatives ; while there are others blessed with such sweetness and benignity as to make every one happy and joyous around them.

“ Nature hath framed strange fellows in her time ;  
Some that will evermore peep through their eyes,  
And laugh, like parrots at a bagpiper ;  
And others of such vinegar aspect,  
That they'll not shew their teeth in way of smile,  
Though Nestor swear the jest be laughable,”

says Shakspeare, that profound observer.

2. A melancholy face casts a damp over the heart ; the man with a sour temper is even more disagreeable to our feelings, because he purposely means to offend. Every spark of joy beaming in the countenance of the happy and cheerful, is reproved by a cold look, a bitter sneer, or by a harsh expression. As pleasure is sympathetic ; increased by participation, or depressed by a frown, we find that, even if we would be happy, we cannot in the presence of those who will not join with us. When they are strangers

or acquaintances we may avoid them ; but if they are relatives to whom we are closely knit by blood and ties the nearest of any, how is our situation to be lamented ! We find others, again, who not only overcloud the serenity of the mind, but suspect all we do, as if cheerfulness and joy were cloaks or subterfuges of evil designs and criminal actions.

These men, gloomy, morose, and suspicious as they are, have little enjoyment even in the loveliness of nature, or the brightness of a summer sky ; as if nature, like man, in their estimation, were a bland deceiver, pleasing the eye, but blighting and searing the heart. Judging all men by themselves, they brood over man's evil nature, and are always under the suspicion that mankind have no nobler pursuit than to conspire against their happiness ; adding insult to injury ; when, perhaps, they have long been consigned to the contempt and oblivion they deserve. Under the influence of this unhappy infirmity of temper, this character suspects and then hates every man, till his conduct has turned every one away from him as a pest ; but, not judging candidly, he believes the cause of aversion to be in the unfriendly and selfish nature of man, whereas the cause is evidently in himself.

In a character of this kind (not uncommon in the world), we find all his feelings and actions eminently selfish ; he is wrapt up in himself ; his being is to him of more importance than all the world ; he thinks of nothing but himself ; cares for nothing but in relation to himself ; and acts with much the same caution and suspicion as the miser with his gold. Disgusted with men without cause, he retires into his own shell, and there broods over the fancies of his jaundiced mind. Without knowledge of the world,

or experience of men by associating with them, he aims at infallible judgment, and profound knowledge of human nature. He censures men for actions he has never experienced himself; defames his species in total ignorance of their good qualities; and suspects them of crimes, and evil-nature, and bad passions, which (if they are real) originate in his own distempered brain.

3. We regard a misanthrope as a walking microcosm of impiety. He is in the moral what an atheist is in the religious world. He is no Christian, because he has no charity to men, and, it may be safely implied, he has no confidence in God. We shall find he is constantly brooding over the physical evils that befall mankind, and, from only seeing the dark side of the picture, indirectly imputes malignity to the Deity, though he dare not confess it. He has a lively sensibility to all the evils that afflict man, but totally disregards the ten thousand blessings that compensate. He is, therefore, without any feelings of gratitude or thankfulness; on the contrary, though he have blessings poured upon him (for He dispenses his favours to the unjust as well as to the just) he is not thankful, but is under the constant apprehension of evils to come, which arise from his own ill-regulated mind. There are many, alas! who actually remember all the afflictions they have suffered and brood over them, and apprehend others to come; but who ungratefully forget the many pleasures and blessings they have enjoyed. Though the evils of life be grievous, they are numerically far fewer than its blessings and enjoyments. Man, however, dwells dolefully on the one, and ungratefully passes over the other.

4. The mere physical evils in the world are hardly to be considered, in comparison with moral evils. No one

can deny, nevertheless, that they are great, and hard to be borne; but there is this difference between the misanthrope and Christian philosopher, that, while the one narrowly looks on the dark or evil side only, the other often recognises what are considered positive evils, to be attended with good to man. God has wisely annexed diseases, and other corporeal afflictions, to the gratification of bad passions, and unruly desires; because, where the influence of moral laws fail in restraining, the dread of physical evil may control. And who dare say there is not positive good in this? Again, it is acknowledged that most, if not all, physical or natural evils in the world, as earthquakes and convulsions, are intended to temperate and mitigate other greater evils which we know not of. The same wise and good Being (in whose acts the sour-tempered and the misanthrope behold tokens of unalloyed evil), who has annexed pain and affliction to breaches of the moral law—punishing the vice in the very instrument of gratification—has, at the same time, annexed health, and happiness, and peace of mind, to temperance and moderation in the gratification of our passions and desires.

5. The only effectual cure we know of to a mind diseased with melancholy, sourness of temper, moroseness, or such like unhappy passions, to which men are heir to, is a draught from the *Book of Life*. As the pool of Siloam cured the diseases of the body, so the living waters of the Bible shall effectually heal the more lamentable diseases of the soul. If there be any earthly source of comfort to which we can direct him, it is to be found in the Christian religion. The nostrums of Stoicism and Epicurism shall all be found to be hollow and unsatisfactory, as those remedies are, which profess, in magniloquent lan-

guage, to cure all manner of diseases; but the taste of the living waters of Eternal Truth has no such uncertainty. Tranquillity of mind,—source of true happiness, *summum bonum* of all philosophy that seeks to secure the welfare of man, is alone to be found in this fountain of grace. It affords comfort in life, and consolation in death; and, therefore, should eagerly be sought by the misanthrope, whose life is miserable, and whose death is wretched. For he who has lived at war with all men, and in distrust of God, can hardly lay down his head in peace.

6. "The most manifest sign of wisdom," observes Montaigne, "is continual cheerfulness; her state is like that of things in the regions above the moon—always clear and serene."

It converts all things into itself. Like the sun on a spring morning, its pleasing light sheds pleasure and serenity over the mind; its warm and joyous rays inspire the heart with sympathy and delight.

"Cheerful looks make every dish a feast,  
And 'tis that crowns a welcome."

It is a sure token of a well tempered mind; of harmony of nature, in which tranquillity and contentment consist; and is, in all cases the effect of the Christian religion over the soul of man. Christianity and melancholy cannot dwell together. The spirit of Christ and sourness of temper, with all its uncharitableness and misanthropy, are inconsistent with each other.

Cheerfulness, or more properly tranquillity of mind (a more comprehensive term), is the essence of happiness, and can only exist with conscious innocence, or, more truly, with perfect confidence in the mercy of God. It is



that which all systems of philosophy have sought after,—but sought after in vain. In vain, because they discovered not its true source, or, at all events, directed men to one of human, and therefore erroneous invention. Futile is it to seek for tranquillity in any of the unstable systems or doctrines of men : we shall discover it to be the mere shadow of that real substance to be found alone in religious faith and moral conduct.

To be desirable, it must be permanent and invariable; dwelling with us through life, and being our consolation and comfort in death. It must not, therefore, be confounded with any of the transitory and evanescent dreams of happiness, that soothe and flatter men's minds for a season, only to be overwhelmed or destroyed by change of circumstances, or any of all the misfortunes of the world.

## ON CHARITY.

~~~~~  
Symbol XXV.—*Quæ ceciderunt e mensa ne tollito.*

Pick not up what is fallen from the table.
~~~~~

1. AMONG the ancients, what fell from the table was, as it were, consecrated to beggars. To pick it up again was considered infamous. These accidental offerings were sacred to the heroes, who were said to be full of goodness and of light; and on this account they became the perquisites of the poor. "What fell from the table among the Greeks," says Dacier, "was like the ears of corn among the Hebrews, that had escaped the hands of the reapers, and which the master was not permitted to gather up; for God had forbidden him."

2. The Christian has no need of having the duty of charity to the poor enforced by a heathen philosopher, when he may have perpetually before him the precepts of the New Testament, or the practice of Christ. He who finds not a guide and prompter in these divine sources, will not be charitable "even if one rose from the dead." There he may discover what no heathen could have taught, that charity is a religious as well as a moral duty. That all is God's, and that man has no indefeasible right in any

thing. He is but the trustee of God's goods, and must give an account to Him of their use and disposal.

3. We are all familiar with that sublime and eloquent passage in St Paul's *First Epistle to the Corinthians* (chap. xiii.), which contains more of the true *philosophy* of charity, than all heathen writings put together. It scatters to the winds all the vain delusions of human reason ; uproots all the theories and systems of moral duties, in which men, without light from on high, have prided themselves as works of truth and stability ; places before us a far loftier standard than any that have been, or could be, suggested by the mind in its natural state ; it dives into the motives of human actions, and teaches (what no human philosophy has ever taught), that humility and sincerity are not alone necessary to the perfection of human conduct ; but that the love of God, and good will towards man (sum and substance of all religion), must be their end. Without this charity, or love, all our actions are profitless.

It teaches us too (what we have already intimated), that charity, in its inferior sense of almsgiving, cannot be considered a virtue, unless it arise from the genuine benevolence of the mind. To be outwardly charitable is no true or certain test of the existence of that virtue ; for the Apostle says, "*Though I bestow all my gifts to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burnt, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.*"

The philosophy of morals teaches us, that sincerity and good motives are necessary in the estimation of human actions ; religious philosophy teaches, that charity or love to God and man, is that which sanctifies them, and constitutes their value.

4. If we take a survey of our own country, we shall find great institutions erected for the benefit of the poor ; we

shall discover that more is given away in acts of charity and benevolence than in any other country in the world. There is also more private benevolence than perhaps any other country can boast of. Therefore, to maintain that Britain is, of all nations, the most distinguished for its charitable institutions, is what is strictly conformable to the truth. Such is the outward impression. But if we come to make inquiries into the probable motives which actuated the founders and supporters, and intimately mix ourselves up with their thoughts and doings, we shall find little of that universal charity alluded to by the apostle. We shall discover, in the majority of cases, that these institutions are exclusive, narrow in their sphere of benevolence, and generally sectarian in their character. To obtain admission, it is not enough to say, "I am a Christian," but to be a worthy object of the charity, it must be said, "I am a Churchman, or a Baptist, or a Methodist, or an Unitarian." This narrow and exclusive spirit is diffused among all the supporters of, and contributors to, these institutions; and therefore it may justly be said they have not charity in the sense of St Paul. Their charity is the instrument, not of glory to God, but the instrument to advance certain doctrines or dogmas; to give to sects and individuals priestly or secular power.

The religion of Christ is now unhappily divided into so many sects and creeds, that the charity, divine and universal, cannot any more be found. One sect abuses and vilifies another; as it is in the sect, so in the individuals. They consign to hell those who are of a different faith, and take away from them even the hope of mercy. What presumption and impiety is this! They impute to the God of all, human passions; and ascribe to Him, personal and particular antipathies.

5. Charity is to think no evil. It diffuses itself over the soul, and causes us to love all men. We are charitable to the poor, not by what we give, but by the spirit in which we give it. When we see a man die suddenly, under particular circumstances, we have no right to say, he dies by the judgment, or, what is really meant, by the wrath of God.

Diagoras, surnamed the Atheist, when at sea, and in danger of shipwreck, was believed by the sailors to be the cause of the storm; but he reproached their uncharitableness by pointing to other vessels in the same strait, and asking if he were on board all of them. Jonas, the man of God, was thrown into the sea for much the same reason.

The Pagan Greeks would not bury one destroyed by lightning, but let him rot where he fell; and it was deemed unlawful to approach the body, because it was believed, as Persius says, to be the work of Jove.

*Triste jaces lucis, evitandumque bidental.*

“A direful instance of Jove’s wrath you lie,  
And whom, being thunderstruck, none dare come nigh.”

These cases (examples of human folly and impiety) should abate in us that odious habit of imputing infidelity to such as differ from us in opinion, and presumptuously call those judgments of God of which we cannot judge, and which charity should prompt us (not knowing better) to attribute to natural causes.

ON MODES OF SALUTATION, &c.

---

**Symbol XXVI.**—*Ne eniquam dexteram facile porrigito.*  
*Shake not hands easily with any man.*

---

1. MODES of salutation form a subject of curious inquiry, not altogether profitless, as they are illustrations of the manners and customs of men, in different countries and in different climates ; all more or less entertaining and instructive. Joining hands, in token of friendship, is of very great antiquity, as may be perceived by the above precept. Diodorus informs us, that the Persians plighted faith by joining the right hand ; and the same ancient custom may be discovered in other ages still more remote.

2. The custom of saluting, or blessing, on the act of sneezing, though now almost obsolete, was very ancient. Besides this, there was a superstitious, or ominous, reverence excited by the motion, which demands some inquiry, as it will develop a few curious particulars in connection with ancient manners. One reason for this singular custom is given by Sir Thomas Browne, to whose industrious researches we are much beholden on this subject, and many others. “ The custom of saluting, or blessing on that motion, it is pretended, and generally believed, to derive its original from a disease, wherein sternutation proved mortal,

and such as sneezed died. And this may seem to be proved from Carolus Sigonius, who, in his *History of Italy*, makes mention of a pestilence in the time of Gregory the Great, that proved pernicious and deadly to those that sneezed." And of its antiquity, the same excellent and learned writer observes, "It was also superstitious and augurial, as Cælius Rhodiginus hath illustrated, in testimonies as ancient as Theocritus and Homer; as appears from the Athenian master, who would have retired because a boatman sneezed: and the testimony of Austin, that the ancients were wont to go to bed again, if they sneezed while they put on their shoes. Plutarch relates, that when Themistocles was sacrificing in his galley, before the battle of Xerxes, one of the assistants on the right hand sneezed, when Euphrantides, the soothsayer, presaged the victory of the Greeks."

While Penelope condemned the numerous suitors who fawned upon her, during the absence of Ulysses, Telemachus, her son, sneezed, which was considered a happy omen:—

———"Telemachus then sneezed aloud;  
Constrained, his nostrils echo'd through the crowd;  
The smiling queen the happy omen blessed."

It is well known, that a whole army, elated with the prospect of success, has been thrown into great consternation and confusion by a sneeze. On the same account, expeditions have been retarded or put off. In the time of Cyrus the younger, while consulting upon their retreat, it chanced that one among them was guilty of this act; at the noise of which, the rest of the soldiers called upon Jupiter Soter. And Aristotle says, that they who heard it, honoured it as somewhat sacred, and a sign of sanity in

the diviner part. Hippocrates, the great physician, observes, that sneezing is a cure for the hiccough, and is profitable to women in labour; and is also good in lethargies, apoplexies, catalepsies, and comas. And the rabbinical account goes so far as to affirm sneezing to be a mortal sign; even from Adam, until it was taken off by the special supplication of Jacob.

It is related by Codignus, that upon an act of sternutation of the Emperor Monomotapa, there passed successive acclamations throughout all the city.

3. We cannot give so satisfactory a reason for the other mode of salutation—joining hands—as Sir Thomas Browne has afforded for the custom of blessing on sternutation, unless we assume there is some sympathetic chord connecting the dexter hand and the heart, which is affected or agitated in proportion to the degree of affection felt.

We have observed, that mankind act as if this were a law of nature, or rule in human economy; for the amount or warmth of affection, or friendship, or at least the profession of it, is indicated by the shake of the hand, or the squeezing of that vein, or chord, which directly leads to the regions of the heart. And deep observers of human nature do not hesitate to assert confidently, that the exact quality or degree of affection may be so gathered, which surely is a proof, that Nature herself, assisted by reason and reflection, opens to the mind this important branch of knowledge. Without claiming any very profound knowledge of our nature, we have imagined that the electric fluid may be a very active agent in this phenomenon; and may distinguish real from professed friendship; because it is evident, in the one case, that a certain vivacity is given to the animal spirits; a warm impulse to the blood; a



quick and sudden agitation to the heart, which sometimes affect the lachrymose glands; throws a warmer shade on the complexion; and, in all cases, gives a brilliancy to the eye, that increases its expression and sensibility; but in the other no such effects follow: the heart remains cold; no electric pleasure issues through the veins; instead of those true demonstrations of friendship, hypocrisy assists us to form mock appearances, and forced smiles, which we do by a kind of muscular effort, and support the vain deception by words as hollow and insincere.

4. There is far more falsehood than can be expressed by language. The essence of all falsehood is in deception; and, therefore, "to shake hands easily with every man," or use the symbolic token of true friendship, where none exists, is hypocrisy and falsehood. In the opinion of Pythagoras, it was a wicked prostitution of the sacred name of friendship, to use the same sign, and to make the same profession to all persons. It is imprudent to contract friendships with all sort of men; for, as Solomon says, it is the man void of understanding who striketh hands. Because it is impossible to have real friendship for every man; and equally impossible is it for all men we know to have friendship for us. We shall shew what the true elements of friendship are, and how rare such an union of qualities can be found as constitute true friendship. Caution and prudence, and discrimination, are required in a high degree, in forming friendships; for a friend becomes a part of ourselves, and he must be found worthy of our confidence. "If," as Cicero says, "there is no acquisition, virtue alone excepted, preferable to a true friend," it is most desirable we should choose one who will be permanent in our affections, as well as agreeable to our nature, and

not abandon us with the indifference of a mere acquaintance.

5. Perhaps there is some illiberality in the proverbial judgment of the world—that a man's character may be estimated by those with whom he associates; for we find men associate who have no harmony of nature, or congruity of opinion. Still there is much truth in the observation, that examples of virtue or vice constantly before our eyes, will, at length, make us more virtuous or more vicious. Familiarity with vice, or indifference to its deformity, is one step towards the practice of it. When we cease to love virtue, we are on the eve of abandoning her. Thus it is, that evil associates are to be avoided, because we leave ourselves to be tempted, and familiarize our minds to vice, which, like virtue, is eager to turn all things into itself; for if God have pleasure in good, the devil may be said to enjoy his pleasure in bad men. It is step by step that the mind descends to crime and profligacy; for no man plunges into their depths all at once.

6, Though we would inculcate caution and prudence in contracting friendships, we have no desire or inclination to imitate those sour and illiberal moralists, who would have us act upon the general rule, that all men are to be considered bad till we have proved them to be good. It is a rule or maxim which we hold in detestation, as contrary to Christian charity, as well as degrading to the species. The teacher of such an odious doctrine is carefully to be shunned, because there must be something essentially bad in his nature. He must judge mankind by himself; for we do not believe that experience of the world can have compelled him to form this opinion into a rule of action.

7. We are more disposed to look upon the bright side

of human nature ; charitably to palliate rather than magnify the vices, follies, and weaknesses of men ; and to extol the goodness, more or less, to be found in every human being. The judgment of men is often weak, leading them to commit follies not to be excused ; but their hearts, in the main, are good. In the midst of vice and the deepest profligacy, we may find rays of goodness and generosity ; from the darkest mind sympathy for distress, and a pity for misfortune, sometimes shine forth, and surprise us. The germ of goodness is in the hearts of all, though often choked up by weeds and thorns ; and it buds forth when we least expect it.

There may be some, indeed, though we hope they are few, who are malign by nature ; and, like a demon, delight in the sufferings of men ; conspire to blast their happiness ; lay traps to ensnare their virtue ; without remorse or feeling, betray confiding innocence ; and with a smile murder while they smile ; but we can hardly class such men in the rank of human beings.

7. Of the conduct to be pursued in choosing friends or associates, we may observe, that generally human nature is shallow, and not profound ; and therefore it is not so difficult to obtain a true estimate of man's character, as is often believed. Every man, or almost every man, has his prevailing weakness, or prominent pursuit ; his mental idiosyncrasy, as it is learnedly called ; the distinctive feature which marks him from others ; and it is by observing these peculiarities that we first get an insight into the deeper parts of his nature. They are the doors which conduct to the interior of the temple. If man confess his *moral* nature to be easily discovered, playing only on the surface of the soul, we shall not find him so readily assent

to the shallowness of the *intellectual*. They who have depth of understanding shew it not to the vulgar-eye ; those who have a mind like the extension of the mathematicians—all surface and no depth—assume a caution and reserve in order to deceive, and to many convey an idea of great profundity. But to the critical eye and observant mind, that can judge from small to great, they are easily unmasked, and exposed to ridicule. And deservedly so ; because, though man cannot be profound and deeply intellectual at will, he has no excuse for being ignorant, or for pretending to possess what he has not taken the pains or trouble to acquire.

8. There are others, again, who, gifted with ease of expression, and a fluent, eloquent tongue ; whose elocution, like that ascribed to Ulysses, is

“ Soft as the fleeces of descending snow,”

make a great shew with very little knowledge. Perhaps such a character has scarcely reflected once in all his life ; never been guilty of deep meditation on any one subject ; and yet he is able, by a gift of nature, to make a greater figure in the world than the profoundest philosopher. With a superficial acquaintance with many subjects, he skims along the surface, and, like the elegant swallow, merely touches lightly the water with his wings. In this art consists the charm of conversation. It is delightful in all, especially with ready wit, and good judgment, and diversity of ideas ; but upon some the effect is greater than to please, for often the best talker is mistaken for the wisest man ; so apt are we to measure a man’s capacity by the outward show of language and conversation.

9. There may be some doubt whether deep contemplation, and the silent abstraction of thought, caused a defi-

ciency of this peculiar faculty in our great men distinguished for philosophy, and learning, and science ; but there can be no doubt that generally they have been remarkable for reserve and embarrassment in society.

As far as we can judge, we have a conviction in our own mind, that there is no greater obstacle to the cultivation of the art of speaking or conversing than the study of philosophy. Whether this arises from the habit of Pythagorean silence, or from the abstraction of the mind, which operates without the use of language, or whether our ideas are too great to be expressed by human language at all, we cannot positively affirm.

ON FRIENDSHIP.

~~~~~  
Symbol XXVII.—*Domesticas hirundines ne habeto.*
Suffer no swallows about your house.
~~~~~

1. THE chattering propensity of this bird has given origin to the more obvious solution of the precept—*receive no great talkers into your family*; but to afford variety to these essays, and for other reasons, I have deviated from this interpretation, and will suggest another which may please from its interest, as well as originality.

I had some doubt of the correctness of the popular interpretation, after discovering the swallow to have been a great favourite in Greece; and because there are other well-known birds, not so beautiful or interesting, that would have made more appropriate types of loquacity.

2. The habits of the swallow were well known to the ancients, as may be found in those passages where they are mentioned. Its mode of building its nest under the eaves of windows, and against the rafters of sheds, is thus alluded to by Virgil :

——— “ ante  
Garrula quàm tignis nidos suspendant hirundo.”

Its migratory instinct, at one time a subject of long dispute among naturalists, attracted notice as early as the

time of Jeremiah the prophet, or may be earlier. The ancients supposed it to winter in Africa, as noticed in the following lines translated from Anacreon :—

“ Pretty, twittering, fickle guest,  
Here you build your summer's nest ;  
But ere storms deface the sky,  
Back to warmer worlds you fly ;  
To Memphis, or the banks of Nile,  
Where bright suns for ever smile.”

In commemoration of the swallow's return, the Rhodians instituted a festival called the “ Feast of Swallows,” on which occasion they were invoked. It was a holiday for the Greek boys, when they carried about young swallows, and sung a song preserved in the works of Meursius, thus rendered in English :\*

“ He comes ! he comes ! who loves to hear,  
Soft sunny hours and seasons fair ;  
The swallow hither comes to rest  
His sable wing and snowy breast.”

Ælian observes, these birds were sacred to the penates, or household gods, and were therefore carefully preserved. They were honoured also as the nuncios of the spring ; and Athenæus says the Rhodians welcomed them with a solemn song.

The proverbial expression—“ one swallow does not make a summer,” is of great antiquity, and common to most nations, as a synonymous expression is found in almost every language. In Aristotle's *Ethics* there is this sentence—“ One swallow makes not a spring.”

3. This creature is not only useful, but necessary, in destroying the myriads of destructive insects generated in

\* Brown's Notes on the Natural History of Selborne.

a summer's day ; and without whose friendly aid the atmosphere would be scarcely habitable by man. It is elegantly remarked by Davy, " that even the beings selected for his prey are poetical, beautiful, and transient. The ephemeræ are saved by his means from a slow and lingering death in the evening, and killed in a moment when they have known nothing of life but pleasure. He is the constant destroyer of insects, the friend of man ; and, with the stork and the ibis, may be regarded as a sacred bird.

4. We find, then, that this elegant bird has been a favourite at all times ; an object of reverence among the Rhodians ; a creature of interest in all Greece ; while its useful qualities are dilated on by modern observers ; what reason could Pythagoras, then, have had for marking it out for obloquy ? Its familiarity and domestic habits ought to make us love it, rather than send it away ; they are peculiarities to be admired, and not condemned.

5. The joy of Pythagoras on the discovery of his great mathematical theorem, when he rushed all naked into the public streets to proclaim it to the world, was hardly exceeded by the intensity of our delight, when we found the golden key which opened to view the true interpretation of this symbol. As our pleasure was alike in kind and in degree, so may be the results of our discovery ! And may the fee-simple be equally unalienable in both ! for we are not unconscious, with all our simplicity and ignorance of the outward world, of the many vultures and other remorseless creatures ready to seize on unlawful prey. Who but with a heart of stone would rob the poor of his young ? Yet every self-begotten idea to an author is as truly his child, as the children of mortal conception are the property of the parents ; and they ought to be equally sacred.



6. *Give no friendship to those who will leave you in the winter of adversity, and only remain with you while the warm breezes of prosperity blow, and while the sky is clear and untroubled,* is the veritable interpretation given under our hand, and claimed as of our creation.

From the migratory habit of the swallow Cicero has drawn this appropriate simile, which aptly illustrates our solution of the symbol: "As swallows are present with us in summer, but are gone in winter; so *false friends* attend us in the sunshine of prosperity; but in the winter of adversity they all flee away."

This fickleness of friendship has been the theme of poets and moralists in all ages. Ovid says—

"Cum fortuna manet, vultum servatis amici;  
Cum cedet, turpi vertitis ora fugâ."

And Shakspeare, in the same strain—

"Those you make friends,  
And give your hearts to, when they once perceive  
The least rub in your fortunes, fall away  
Like water from ye."

There is hardly a word more constantly in men's mouths than friendship, but how few can say they have experienced it in reality! So rare is it, says Sir P. Sydney (and he was among the few who have tasted it), that it may be doubted whether it be a thing indeed, or but a word. And it may be said it is a common weakness to boast of numerous friends, as if the heart could expand to accommodate all applicants; but Cicero, with more knowledge of human nature, maintains in his *Lælius*, that friendship can only be concerned about two or three at the utmost. Friendship, says he, may be defined thus:—a perfect con-

formity of opinions on all religious and civil subjects, united with the highest degree of esteem and affection. And Aristotle conceived the union of two friends to be so perfect, that he defines friendship to be *one* soul with *two* bodies ; there must be not only a community of opinion, and mutual esteem and affection, but a kind of blending of one soul into the other, and, consequently, a conformity and perfect harmony in pursuits, tastes, inclinations, and dispositions. Therefore friendship, so called, composed of discordant temperaments and heterogeneous elements, is only a temporary alliance of no inherent durability. Where we find vice in one limb of the soul, and virtue in another, friendship in such resembles the composition of those prophetic kingdoms where one part is of clay and the other of iron, types of their internal weakness and outward brittleness. No more can we expect the friendships of vicious men to be more stable. In vice itself we have a worm gnawing at the core, destroying the bud of friendship, that will sufficiently account for its own internal decay. Virtue is the only true cement of friendship ; all others are fallacious. Hence Cicero wisely says, " virtue is both the parent and support of friendship." In virtue there is not only a durable cement, but an object for forming friendships, and a strong reason for preserving them. Virtue is the centre-point to which all our heartfelt emotions turn ; and as long as it burns within us we have an object of attraction. But although virtue be the support of friendship,—a fundamental principle in its formation also,—its bare existence cannot constitute friendship. There must exist that innate harmony and power of mutual attraction essential in the creation of true friendship, arising out of

a multiplicity of subordinate particulars, easier to be felt than clearly expressed.

It is obvious that friendship is not much more under our control than the passion of love. As we love and know not why we love ; so we feel the sentiment of friendship, and can give no better reason. Both are emotions of the mind which come into being without the agency of the will. Of two virtuous men, equally estimable, we shall be careless about the friendship of the one, while we shall cling to the other.

7. There are several illustrious examples of noble and disinterested friendship in ancient history ; as the beautiful and affecting one of David and Jonathan, and Orestes and Pylides ; in all of which we perceive a devotion to each other of a surprising kind. The sacrifice of life for each other was considered as no more than was due to friendship. And surely no greater proof of disinterested affection can we have, or higher test of the true loftiness and nobility of this virtue, than a man laying down his life for a friend. This very proof was used by Christ on a greater occasion, and in such a way as to satisfy us that a proof of this kind amounts to conviction. Disinterestedness is so noble in a world where all is selfishness, that any great examples of it convey a pleasure to the mind. It constitutes a necessary element of friendship ; the interest of the one becomes the interest of the other ; what injures one wounds both ; and pleasure as well as pain are mutually enjoyed and suffered.

8. The existence of such perfect friendship is so rare, that man can scarcely hope to have it realized in himself. Like the atoms of Epicurus, he may wander through the world long without meeting the other friendly atom to

which fate may have sometime determined to attach him. But there is no reason on this account to despond ; to become melancholy ; to retire into himself ; or forsake the world and its more common and rougher friendships : these have advantages which no moralist can overlook, much less despise. The man who believes himself capable of the higher flight, cannot consistently hide so noble a gift ; but, on the contrary, the disinterestedness necessary in its formation is sure to display itself in associating with men. It will sprout out in some other direction, or flow through some other channel, as in a life of benevolence and philanthropy. Instead of being concentrated in one focus, it will be diffused amongst all.

9. The friendship of the world terminates in being social and kind one to another. It enables us to obtain a knowledge of our nature on a more expanded scale ; of man in his social and domestic relations (where he is seen generally in his truest character) ; as a member of the great human family ; as one who more or less exercises an authority over his sphere, whether for good or for evil. The friendship of the world gives the good man scope for benevolence ; to the philosopher it opens to view the springs and motives of human conduct ; and to the moralist, and lover of his species, affords the means of ameliorating the condition of man in his most important feature : by the examples brought constantly before our eyes, of virtue or of vice, we may all of us, by experience, avoid the rocks and sands on which others have been shipwrecked, and by prudence and wisdom steer our bark into the haven of safety and of rest.

10. We cannot expect that common friendships hastily formed, and of unsound elements, should be of long dura-

tion. We should not be greatly disappointed if they are broken up as suddenly as they were contracted. Yet, though the cold stern moralist may thus write or reason in his study, and warn unthinking man against the certain issue, mankind will still go on expecting much from friendship, and still continue to feel its instability and hollowness. We all long after friendship ; we enjoy and appreciate it while it lasts ; and, perhaps, never dream of its termination till we feel its stroke ; it is this desire which prompts us to fall into the snare and feel the disappointment.

11. If friendships are formed in prosperity, it is adversity which tries them. It is then that we become conscious of the brittle reed on whose support we depended ; of the weakness and wickedness of man ; it is then we taste that bitter potion which turns all to wormwood, and which turns our heart and sympathy away from human kind.

So long as we have wealth we are sure to have friends and adulators ; but the moment fortune deprives us of it, we shall find them all flee away. Even if we have preserved our virtue in the midst of temptation, and nobly risen above the base and interested flatterers who daily poured poison into our ears ; nay, even if our very virtues burn brighter in the midst of misfortune (as they often do), and exalt us to a higher state of moral being, we shall find them of little avail so long as they have not wealth and influence to support them. So must it ever be where wealth is synonymous with virtue, and where poverty is a crime.

12. The dictates of common prudence, then, teach us

to be cautious in the formation of friendships that may end in misery and disappointment. The mere loss of wealth is not so bitter a reflection as the loss of friends. Though it may appear a harsh and unnatural expression, we believe the best philosophy is neither to trust in princes nor in any of the sons of men. It is a dangerous thing to have our happiness and peace of mind dependent upon the friendship of the world. If the richest man was he who asked least of the gods; so may we truly say the wisest man is he who has least dependence on the world.

13. In conclusion: Let us avoid those swallows, or human *hirundines*, who build their nests under our windows, and, for "a mess of pottage," return us flattery. We cannot be so harsh and uncharitable as Hermoine, who says in *Andromache*,

" Never let the wise  
Give females license to frequent his house,  
And hold free converse with his wife."

But we may affirm, that we cannot have a more dangerous enemy within our walls, than one of those wretched and drivelling parasites whose false tongue never ceases to vibrate in our praise. However by nature modest in the estimate of our own characters, we shall in the end judge of them by the standard of our flatterer. Few can resist flattery (sweet but fatal poison); and so pleasing is it to many, that they cannot associate with free and elevated minds, but betake themselves to humble friends, and pay in substance for praises willingly bestowed. Wiser even was he who kept a skeleton to remind him of death; far wiser that monarch who, afraid of being puffed up to be-

lieve himself a god, hired a man to put him in mind of his mortality.

Man in society is a creature of forms and ceremony ; and he must needs hire a familiar to please him with his commonplaces, as kings of old hired fools, to relax the bonds of state and ceremony.

ON BAD ASSOCIATES.

~~~~~  
Symbol XXVIII.—*Melanuros ne gustato.*
Eat not fish whose tails are black.
~~~~~

1. It will have become clear and manifest, that to analyse, explain, or comment on these profound and mystical Symbols, as they ought to be analysed, explained, and commented on,—copiously and learnedly; and as the wise and excellent author would have approved of; almost universal knowledge is required of him who has courage to undertake the “*magnum opus*.” Not only genius, invention, and apt illustration, are essential, but a competent acquaintance also with the objects used in composing the symbols.

Here, for example, the commentator finds the want of the knowledge of that branch of zoology, called ichthyology, or science of fishes; for without it how can he pretend to know the peculiarities of those fishes whose tails are black? And being ignorant of their idiosyncrasy (to use a learned phrase), or peculiar temperament, how can he comprehend the allusion contained in the symbol? In truth, not only the science of morals in all its branches; the deeper sciences of metaphysics and logic, in all their windings, must be perfectly known by the commentator; but



he must likewise have a deep insight into natural history, and all the wondrous works of nature, in heaven and in earth. So that the task of illustrating and expounding these ancient symbolic or enigmatic phrases, and raising a stable and permanent building on so uncertain a foundation, is not so easy of accomplishment, as appears at first sight. After these observations, the reader will, no doubt, fully appreciate our irksome and perplexing task ; and be pleased with our performance of it.

2. Some kind of fish possess a bag of inky liquid, with which they ingeniously perturb the water before seizing on their prey ; and it is known that others, no less cunning, employ the same artifice, in order to escape their voracious enemies. These are facts of natural history. And how does our sagacious moralist employ them to his purpose ? As those fish are endowed by nature with such gifts ; so man, by the evil of his imagination, in order to mislead and deceive, first throws dust into the eyes of his neighbour, or when he desires to calumniate, and yet escape punishment, he secretes from his gall a black, poisonous, corrosive liquid, called *slander*, perfectly analogous to the inky secretion of a fish. But more properly the symbol refers to such whose reputation or character contaminates all who associate with them ; as the devil, in vulgar phrase, is said to leave tokens of his presence in a strong, pungent, sulphureous odour, so those “ whose tails are black,” never leave us but with some marks of their infamy or malignity.

3. The good opinion of the world is a thing to be courted and not despised. This opinion is deeply influenced or affected by the company we keep. If we are

found associating with bad characters, and choosing the society of men of doubtful reputation, whatever our virtues may be, they can never be respected. For all experience teaches us, that virtue and vice can have no alliance; we cannot touch pitch without being defiled; we cannot make companions of vice and infamy, without contamination. And as the world judges men, so must we act agreeably to the opinion of the world, in order to gain respect and approbation.

4. Beware, therefore, of the vicious, the bad, the infamous, the slanderer, the man of odious reputation; but be on your guard also against another dangerous character in society (most dangerous to the young and inexperienced), namely, the man who takes delight in perturbing the crystal water of truth, with the blackness of falsehood; who delights in confounding the true and the false; and in subverting every point of belief which leads to human happiness. When he discovers a good man dilating with pleasure on the goodness and benevolence of God, he chills his warm feelings by instances of evil in the world; when he finds another affording demonstration of the existence of that Being (though he himself passively believes it), he turns round with a sneer, and shews that it resembles any other fiction of the imagination; again, if he see one expatiating on the excellence of another's character, his benevolence, his goodness to the poor, he coldly meets it by asserting, that the best of moralists all agree in thinking, that such virtues as benevolence and generosity have their origin in selfishness or self-love. What cannot be proved, he pretends to disbelieve; what experience does not support, he affects to despise; what reason can-

not comprehend, is with him no article of faith. In human virtue, he has no confidence ; the common belief of men, he despises ; every opinion usually received, he rejects with scorn ; and with just sufficient knowledge and skill, to use an argument against his adversary, he passes in the world as a man of great learning, if not great genius. Truth, in his estimation, is a small affair. All he cares for is to act the sophist, and confound the understanding of weak men. There is so much plausibility in all he says—so much temper and mildness in delivering his opinions (for such a man has no fervency or enthusiasm), so much logical display in the arguments he uses, that the unformed mind is led astray, and falls into the snare. But the man of deep reflection, who comprehends, as a whole, the world around, will discover that all his arguments are mere sophisms, or fallacies ; the exposition of one false premise, or one erroneous deduction ; or a false move in any direction, not perceived by the inexperienced eye, shall demonstrate the absurdity of his whole argument.

4. For example, he will affect the man of pure reason ; the calm philosopher ; the deep enquirer ; and declare, that none but a fool can believe what is not comprehended by his reason ; and, indirectly, or by surmise, throws ridicule on every thing wonderful or mysterious, or incomprehensible in nature ; he will then shew how absurd it is, with such an opinion, to believe the soul to be spiritual, and therefore immortal ; to believe in miracles of any kind ; or what he calls violent and abrupt deviations from the ordinary course of nature ; whereas, if he were asked to explain, on rational grounds, or rather by human reason-

ing, the wonderful phenomena that are constantly going on before his eyes, he would be at a loss to answer. If he will not believe what is incomprehensible, why so inconsistent (all infidels are inconsistent) as to believe in the movements of the planetary system; or, to descend to more familiar objects, the growth of a flower; the expansion and dissipation of bodies; the combustion of matter; the mystery of electricity and magnetism; the miraculous power of vapours in expanding; the wonderful change of food into blood, whether that food be animal or vegetable; the propagation of the kind; the perpetuated likeness of person and character in individuals; and ten thousand other things daily going on before his eyes, which are believed, and yet human reason has never yet fathomed, understood, or comprehended them.

5. Diffidence and modesty are the attributes of great knowledge. Man soon discovers that there is more in heaven and earth than is comprised in his philosophy. The soul fully imbued with the mysteries of nature, finds much to believe, which is not to be understood. Things which cannot be comprehended, are not fit subjects for human reason. And he is only conspicuous for impudence and impiety, who can pretend to explain what is inexplicable. Let him follow the example of that ancient sage, of whom the divine Milton says,—

“ The first and wisest of them all profess’d  
To know this only, that he nothing knew.”

6. Make friends of those who love truth, and reverence the deep things of nature. They are the wisest, as well as the best. Their holy purpose is to make all manifest that can be made manifest; rather to separate the corn

from the tares, than mingle falsehood with truth. In them there is no presumption, no arrogance, no undue reliance on human reason; but a spirit of deep humility and devotion; the abiding principle of the profoundest knowledge—who will exclaim, “How fearfully and wonderfully are we made!” without presuming to question or doubt the wisdom and power of the potter.

## ON HOSPITALITY.

~~~~~  
Symbol XXX.—*Animalia unguicurvia ne nutrito.*

Feed not animals that have crooked claws.
 ~~~~~

1. PERHAPS now, from being less dependent on each other, and from other momentous changes society has undergone, the virtue of hospitality is neither so much practised, nor so highly esteemed by modern nations, as of old. By ancient nations, it was considered a virtue of the highest class. The practice of it is seen to be peculiarly conspicuous among people semi-barbarous, as evinced in ancient history, as well as among others blessed with more civilization and refinement. The Jews even—most exclusive of nations—were required to shew hospitality to strangers, and not to turn them away from their doors. At their simple repasts, they offered them the highest place,—a great mark of deference and esteem; and waited upon them in their own persons, as a mark of humility and respect. The same singular custom prevailed in other countries, as may be seen in Homer, and other observers of manners and customs of society in ancient times. Such were the relations between the host and his guests.

2. It may be inferred, that where the virtue of hospitality was so generally practised, a breach of it would be

regarded with strong feelings of horror and dislike. Such was the case. A violation of the rule or custom was looked upon as heinous as an act of impiety; it was an offence to man and to the gods, who, if they sometimes forgave or overlooked the depravity of man, would not permit this crime to pass unpunished. The perpetrator of so gross an act was regarded as a being out of the pale of society, a person with whom no one, who respected virtue, or his own reputation, would hold converse. He was very much on a par with him who would pursue a man to the altar, and there murder him. As the altar afforded protection to the criminal, judgment thereby passing into the hands of God; so hospitality, or being within the threshold, was a protection to the individual. No man dared avenge himself, even on his enemy, when he sought hospitality at his hands.

We find in 'Euripides, that Polymester killed Polydore for the money he had, being at the same time his guest; an act of intolerable cruelty and wickedness. Hecuba, in revenge for an action so atrocious, put his sons to death, and then put out the eyes of the father. Upon this Polymester pleads an excuse for the murder of his friend and guest; upon which Agamemnon makes this reply:—

“ To seize his gold, thou didst it, and now seekest,  
In thy distress, to mould some fair pretext.  
Trivial to you the murder of a guest  
May be; we Grecians start with horror back  
At such a deed of baseness.”

3. Hospitality is an act of grace we ought still to practise, as becomes our means and circumstances; though now, from changes in society, we cannot carry it out so universally as of old. Travellers or strangers are no longer

dependent upon the kindness and protection of those whose country they visit, to the extent they were in ancient times, when they could not have pursued their course without their aid and bounty. Our hospitality now is, in a degree, limited to our friends and relatives. In the entertainment of guests, we must use our discrimination as to the worthiness or unworthiness of those we admit to our tables; and not invite "animals with crooked claws;" namely, those who are avaricious or dishonest; such as will devour our substance, abuse our kindness; as are ungrateful for our bounty and liberality, and in all things care not for us further than as mere instruments for attaining their mean and selfish ends. On them our kindness is wasted; we have no comfort or consolation from it. Still many have not the courage to expel or refuse admission to such characters, when they have once taken a hold upon them. Finding themselves impoverished by fawning parasites, and shameless guests, they cannot boldly stay and exclaim, "Thither shall I go, and no farther;" but proceed on, in their downward course, till the day is gone, and the night comes on apace, when they discover that all is lost, and that with the fortune the fickle friends have fled away.

4. Perhaps the Pythagorean injunction alludes also to our servants and dependents, as well as our acquaintances; for, to our cost, we discover among them many creatures with crooked claws. We not only feed them, but in many cases confide in them, and are deceived and robbed. How many have felt the "crooked claws" of an unjust steward! How many have found their riches ooze out like water from a bucket, without knowing whence it goes, or how it flows! The fidelity of such "humble friends;" their ho-



nessy and discretion, are objects of no mean importance in a world where our sum of happiness is made up of a number of trifling units. Domestic happiness, sought after by the great majority of men, who let others struggle for influence, fame, or notoriety, mainly depends upon their household being free from animals with crooked claws; and assisted in its quiet harmony, and unambitious enjoyments, by domestics in whom they can trust.

5. Again, it might refer to a certain class in society, well known of old as now, who are endowed with claws more curved than the talons of the vulture or eagle; in which, if we are once caught, there is no escape. This class may be philosophically considered a necessary evil in the world, which shall exist as long as man is the creature of passion, of avarice, of revenge. They live by the passions of men, as some crawling reptiles live and batten on corruption. They have the merit of some other animals who are called the scavengers of nature; that eat up the dead carcases of creatures, and clear the world of their pollution. They are mercenaries—they combat not for empty glory, but for a golden prize. They are mediators hired to dispense equity; they are bribed to give an impartial judgment; and such is their *virtue*, that implicit reliance is placed on their justice, their integrity, their impartiality.

That they are necessary to society, in the highest view we can take of it, as a civil or social state, we may utterly deny. As priests have at all times multiplied in proportion as superstition has increased, so have these augmented their numbers in proportion to crime and general corruption.

In that scheme of a commonwealth we intend giving to

the world, when brought to perfection ;—a scheme incomparably superior to the visionary dreams, and fanciful hallucinations, of Sydney, or Bacon, or Harrington, or More, all great men and worthy characters ;—we have made no provision for the class referred to ; we have not even conceived the possibility of their existence in our Arcadia, so that, having no *locum tenens*, they must be considered *nonens*. Where there is no corruption to feed on, they must needs perish ; or make a virtue of necessity, and become honest, and conformable to our ideal standard of the people of this perfect community. It is where the carcase is, that the vultures are gathered together.

In contemplating this crying evil in society, which wrings the tears from the widow, and makes the orphans a prey, we have observed that, among other things, the imperfection of language is one cause instrumental to its existence. A profound diplomatist observed, that language was given to man to conceal his thoughts ; we may remark, that it likewise was given to perplex the human mind ; for language has caused more disputes in the world than all other things put together.

In consequence of this, we have found it necessary, in our commonwealth, to create a new language, agreeably to the character, the simplicity, and the innocence of the people.

## ON SOCIALITY.

~~~~~

Symbol XXX.—Salem apponito.

Always put salt on the table.

~~~~~

1. "SALT, as incorruptible," observes Sir Thomas Browne, "was the symbol of friendship, and, before the other service, was offered unto their guests; which, if it casually fell, was accounted ominous, and their amity of no duration." It was also a symbol of hospitality; and is so to this day in eastern countries, where to eat of a man's salt, and partake of his hospitality, are synonymous terms. It is a word frequently used in the sacred Scriptures, as a type of the excellence of the moral law; to obey which was productive of those incorruptible and conserving properties that salt possesses in a high degree. By the Levitical law, the Jews of old were required, as an indispensable duty, to use it in all their offerings. It was considered of great importance in their ceremonies, and a most significant type, on account, no doubt, of its peculiar character, of not only being incorruptible itself, but as being the cause of preserving other things from decay and corruption.

2. It appears to us, after due reflection, that the symbol contains an injunction to be cheerful and sociable at

our repasts, that occasion being the most proper to give ourselves up to pleasure and hilarity, to inspire our guests with happiness, by the entertainment of our discourse, and a cheerful countenance. The heart shut up by the cares of the world, should now freely open itself to social and friendly intercourse; the mind, at other times harassed with business, should now relax itself, and be relieved and refreshed by freedom and cheerfulness at the table. Every man requires intervals of relaxation; it is good for the body as well as for the soul; and Nature seems to have appointed our repasts as the proper periods for unbending the mind; she countenancing the practice by carrying on her secret operations more effectually under a cheerful state, than in one of silence, solitude, and morbid feeling.

3. The act of eating is a mere sensual animal enjoyment, of which every brute has as much capacity as man. We might look upon a public exhibition of this kind with disgust, were it not that nature blinds our eyes to its revolting features, in inspiring us with mutual pleasure, exciting in our hearts feelings of kindness and friendship, and, in a surprising manner, mixing the rational with the irrational, the spiritual with the physical, and so reconciling the mind to view with indifference a common act of the animal nature, that, of itself, would infallibly excite feelings of loathing and disgust. Thus, if our repast has been enlivened with "attic salt," we come away with pleasurable sensations, as having been acting the part of reasonable beings; but, on the contrary, if no entertainment, no cheerful discourse, has enlivened the dull act of eating, we almost feel ashamed at what we have done; and find no recompense in mere animal enjoyment for the dulness and stupidity of our guests. With animals, eating is a

solitary pleasure; they have no instinct to be sociable, they eat for the mere sake of gratification, and have more pleasure by themselves than with companions; but with man the case is different; he is of a sociable nature, and has little pleasure in solitary enjoyment.

4. At our repasts our conversation should be light and cheerful; not heavy and dull. There is a time for every thing, and this is not a fit occasion for ponderous discourses on morals or metaphysics, or set dialogues on subjects of a deep and perplexing kind. In fact, our conversation should be short and broken, consisting of passing remarks, witty observations, and such like; and not long, tedious, formal discourses. Our countenances should also be cheerful and radiant with delight; for a dull melancholy aspect, or a forbidding look, is fatal to all enjoyment. One single guest of this kind shall spread misery around the board.

## ON GASTRONOMY.

~~~~~

Symbol XXXI.—*A morticinis abstineto.*
Abstain from animals that die of themselves.

~~~~~

1. It is probable, that most nations had a repugnance to eat animals that died of themselves ; and upon this popular prejudice, Pythagoras may have raised this symbol. The dislike to such food is in some respects founded on reason, or more properly on experience, as animals that die in this manner have diseases ; or their flesh is in such a state as to render it impure and unwholesome. As we shall see hereafter, Pythagoras enjoins his disciples to abstain from animal food altogether, so that, in this symbol, it may be consistently inferred, he meant more than meets the eye. Under the physical, there is no doubt concealed a moral precept ; under the literal, a more profound and mystical application.

2. We may discover in the pages of history, records to some extent, of manners and customs, that every nation differed from another as respects the objects of food. What was delighted in by one people, was abhorred by another ; what was considered pure in one country, was deemed the contrary in the one adjacent. Those distinctions and peculiarities, though now more faint, by inter-

communication, and greater refinement, are still found more or less to exist.

We all know how particular the Jews were with regard to animal food ; not less particular in this respect were the ancient Egyptians ; from whom, as we have often repeated, Pythagoras derived many of his peculiar notions. Swines' flesh was abhorred by the Egyptians, as much as by the Jew. The reason is not so clear as the fact. *Ælian* affirms hog's flesh was never partaken of, because he was believed to eat his own offspring. In the *Golden Verses* ascribed to Pythagoras, it is there commanded to abstain from the meats which are forbidden in the purification, and in the deliverance of the soul, among which, no doubt, was included the meat of animals that die of themselves.

3. We might compile a volume, if we were so inclined, on the gastronomic peculiarities of different nations : trace, in historical succession, the decline and fall of one taste, and the rise of another : and, as the geologist who rears a perfect animal from a few dry bones, give a picture of mankind in those defunct ages, when men were giants, and ate with the appetites of giants. From the capacious appetite, for example, of Ajax, as related in Homer, who had for his repast a whole chine of beef, we might calculate his height in cubits and spans :

“ The king himself, an honorary sign,  
Before great Ajax placed the mighty chine.”

The same surprise is excited in our minds by the mighty doings of those gigantic men, by another passage in the same poet, in which we find,—

——“ Patroclus o'er the blazing fire,  
Heaps, in a brazen vase, three chines entire ;  
The brazen vase Automedon sustains,  
Which flesh of porket, sheep and goat contains.”

We could shew, that, in the days of Mæcenas and Virgil, and patron of both, Augustus, with Rome in all her grandeur on the seven hills, with luxury softening her warlike people, and refinement eating up the last dregs of her former vigour, no flesh was preferred before young apes. Oysters from Britain, lobsters, mullet, and lampreys, were also delicacies among the Romans, celebrated by Juvenal. So he says was the monstrous liver of a pampered goose.

Heliogabalus (who would have feasted on the sun, had it been possible) esteemed cock's-combs as a great delicacy. Some Roman palates delighted in the *sumen*, or belly, and dugs of swine with pig.

The womb of the same animal, especially when barren, or when it had just cast its young, though a tough and membranous part, was considered a great relish by epicures. It is said by no less an authority than Galen, that young, fat, and gelded dogs were the food of many nations. Hippocrates ranks the flesh of whelps with that of birds. Among the Persians, we are told by Herodotus, horses, camels, and apes, were great convivial dishes.

The luxury and extravagance of some Romans of rank and wealth were almost beyond credence. One squandered a treasure in providing peacocks' tongues on a great festive occasion. It is related by Athenæus, that Apicius, the great Roman glutton, having been used to eat at Minturnæ a kind of cray-fish, which exceeded in size the lobsters of Alexandria, having heard there was some of those



fish still larger to be found on the coast of Africa, sailed immediately in spite of many inconveniences. When such a man had a desire for any thing out of season, no cost was spared to buy it. Some glutton desired a dish of fish which could not be had, and his cook fearing his master's anger, had the ingenuity to imitate that fish by some kind of vegetable, which deceived the palate of the glutton.

The names given to some of their rare and celebrated dishes shew the estimation in which they were held. A particular kind of dish of fish was called *cerebrum Jovis*; another they called *clypeum Minervæ*; like the modern Italians, who profanely call their most exquisite wines *lachrymæ Christi*, and *lac Virginis*.

4. In returning from this apparent digression, we may, in conclusion, observe that the secret meaning of the symbol is, to abstain from what in Scripture is called "dead works." Like dead bodies, they are corrupt, corruptible, and to be abominated; deceitful to men, and hateful to God. They are the base offspring of human pride, arrogance, presumption, and vanity. By them a man dare justify himself to God, and look down upon his fellows with contempt, saying, "I am holier than thou!" As life is the animating principle of the body, so faith is the animating principle of the soul. He who does good without faith pleases himself; he who does good in faith, seeks to please God. In the one we discover strong marks of pride, self-sufficiency, self-righteousness, arrogance, contempt of others; a spirit unsocial, uncharitable, unforgiving; in the other we find deep humility—mark of the soul touched with true religion—self-denial, self-abasement; a spirit of love, benevolence, and charitableness to every thing having the breath of life. The one looks for heaven, as a

certain reward for good deeds done in the body ; the other, with a hundred-fold more devotion, goodness, and true piety, exclaims, in the agony of self-consciousness, yet entire dependence on a higher power, " Lord, what can I do to be saved !"

Those who know mankind, and have viewed them in this particular aspect, will find much to surprise, and much to please. They will, for example, observe many who would be regarded as Christians moving in a superior orbit, with a manner and conduct that would be deemed hateful in an atheist ; they will find others, without any strong profession or fervent zeal, with manners mild and humble, tokens of the inward spirit, whose every thought and emotion has a deep religious cast. The former's religion is nothing more than an ardent zeal for a sect, a church, or some mere profession ; while the other draws his religion and piety from the fountain-head.

## ON CLEANNESS AND UNCLEANNES.

~~~~~  
Symbol XXXH.—*Animalis vulvam ne comedito.*
Eat not the matrix of animals.
 ~~~~~

1. CLEANNESS and uncleanness are believed by the vulgar to be kinds of abstract qualities of bodies. But the philosopher knows they are only ideas of the mind, as colour is in the eye, and not in the external object. The Jews were constantly guilty of this fallacy—excusable, perhaps, among a people whose religion was full of formality—and even St Paul was inclined to the same belief till he was corrected by the vision of food. Jesus Christ has said that nothing is unclean which enters the mouth of a man, but only what comes from it, as evil expressions, deceit, lying, blasphemy, and such like. There is nothing in nature which can be properly called *sui generis* unclean; all impurity is in relation to man, to the moral sense of man. Therefore, though we are sensible of disgust and loathing at some objects external to us, we must not think there is any actual impurity in those objects independently of our own feelings or perceptions. What God has made is altogether good; and if he has given us ideas of cleanness and uncleanness, they are intended to guard us against the one as injurious to our health and preserva-

tion, and make us desire the other as beneficial to them. He has instilled into us a dislike of impurity in our bodies, a disgust in coming into contact with certain things, because cleanliness is necessary to our health and comfort ; the same dislike and disgust affect us also in respect of objects that tend to give immoral and impure ideas to the soul ; besides these, other safeguards are given to protect our virtue, raising in the reflecting mind proportionate ideas of the supreme goodness and wisdom of our Maker.

2. We may be sure that Pythagoras did not fall into the vulgar error ; and it may, therefore, be inferred, that the symbolic injunction has a deeper signification than appears on the surface. It bears an allusion to the prevalent doctrine in ancient times of generation and corruption ; generation and corruption proceeding in perpetual succession or endless causation. Death, according to this doctrine, was the cause of life, and life the cause of death. By this we have seen that Plato attempted a demonstration of the immortality of the soul. The death of animals gives sustenance to plants ; the corruption and decomposition of plants give being to animals. Our bodies, when they are laid in the tomb, perform the same office. Nature finds use for all things ; nothing can exist without a purpose or a design. She regards not our pride when we strut in this tabernacle of clay, and become oblivious to the end of our creation ; for the body, which is our pride, and in which we glory before men as weak and insignificant as ourselves, she finds a use hereafter on which we can hardly reflect without mortification. This body becomes the prey of worms ; food for loathsome reptiles, on which we cannot think but with disgust.

3. In the opinion of some ancient philosophers, generation and corruption are inseparably connected. Corruption befalls all things sublunary; and the soul of man (once the being of a purer state, now separated from its great Parent), by contact and union with the body, itself most corrupt and dissoluble of earthly things, has been drawn down to the realms of corruption. Generation, mystery of nature unfathomable, is but a link in the causation of corruption; as corruption is the consequence of generation.

4. The corruption of our bodies is a law of nature which cannot be controverted; it is inseparable from our present being, and cannot, therefore, be properly called an evil. By the dissolution of our bodies our souls receive their emancipation, and it may be considered, therefore, more in the light of a blessing than of a curse. While we are alive, our bodies are objects of care and preservation; but after death we are as indifferent to them as the butterfly is to the chrysalis in which it was entombed, or the unfledged bird to the egg from which it emerges to active life and liberty. What we are enjoined to shun is not the impurity of the body; what we are called upon to hate and reject is not its corrupt nature and mortal constitution, but the impurity of the soul, rendered corrupt and unclean by impure desires and unholy passions. By these it is brought down rapidly to the realms of generation and corruption, debarring it from future liberty and eternal bliss. Against this descent of the soul we are required to struggle incessantly, by the contemplation of such ideas as exalt the mind; by the practice and the love of virtue; and by the study of philosophy.

5. To attain this desirable end—agreeable to our ra-

tional and immortal nature—we must first be satisfied of the superiority of the moral over the mere animal nature; as we give a preference to virtue over vice, and then in all cases act conformably to the standard our reason sets up. If we then can bring our minds to prefer the moral and intellectual portion of our being to the vicious and animal, we shall soon discover that they are, by nature, inimical to each other; and that we must triumph in the one or succumb to the other. The mind cannot serve two masters. We shall either become the slaves of our passions or the masters of them; the former must either act in place of reason, or reason must make them subserve her interests, and for the good of the whole.

6. The purity, excellence, and freedom of the mind, depend greatly upon the avoidance of all such ideas as tend to inspire unclean thoughts and impure desires. Some passions are violent while they last, but they are soon spent, and the soul is again restored to its usual serenity; but impurity in our thoughts acts on the soul as rust on iron; it corrodes and changes its character, tarnishing its original brightness, and debasing all its faculties.

Experience daily teaches us, that temperance in the indulgence of the passions (given to man for the wisest purposes) is alone compatible with human happiness. The secret of what men are in quest of all their lives, lies in moderation in every thing; when our moral and sensual natures work harmoniously together, blending peace with enjoyment, and pleasurable reflections with satisfaction. Nature has so designed them to operate together, and where we discover any incongruity, or separate interest, or opposition, the fault is with the man and not with his Maker.

The tranquillity of mind, lauded with transports of delight and enthusiasm by the ancients, is, in truth, nothing more than the certain result of the harmony between the moral and the animal natures, acting in their proper relations to each other, and with that temperance and moderation necessary to the well-being of both. This state of mind, much to be desired, the only true and permanent source of happiness on earth, is within the reach of every man who will resolve to attain it.

## ON MODESTY AND PUDICITY.

~~~~~  
Symbol XXXIII.—*Surgens e lecto, stragulam conturbato, vestigiumque corporis confundito.*

Stir up the bed as soon as you are risen, and leave in it no print of your body.
 ~~~~~

1. IN the *Clouds of Aristophanes* it is observed that *Justice*, in referring to the golden days of ancient Athens, when she was highly honoured and revered, said, the young men were so well brought up, that not one who went to school durst commit the least immodesty; and they were so scrupulous with regard to chastity, that when they rose up they never omitted to smooth the place where they had been sitting, that no mark of any part of the body might remain. Happy should we be to find proofs of the same delicacy and modesty among our young men, who have all the advantages of a superior religion and better education. Modesty and charity were virtues more highly appreciated in ancient and heathen, than in modern and Christian times, for no reason we can give, except that the tone of opinion was higher as respects these virtues; and that the example, in practice, was shewn by the higher classes to a greater extent than in modern times. At all events, many instances are given by historians of continency and self-denial which are not excelled in mo-



dern narrative, and in such a way as to mark them with admiration and applause.

2. When we consider the state of society at the time in which Cyrus lived, the gross ignorance of the people, and absolute power of kings and princes—the want of public opinion, so called, to influence and regulate the conduct of men, we cannot but admire the instance of continency in his own remarkable and illustrious life. While yet a young man, full of passion, and with the means of gratifying every desire, he refused even to see a beautiful young girl taken captive in war, lest he might be tempted from the path of honour and chastity. All the captivating descriptions of his parasites could not induce him even to see her, so modest an estimate did he form of his own virtue; and so lofty an idea of self-respect, that he would not condescend to take advantage of what, in those times, would have been considered a lawful prize. The continence of Scipio Africanus at a very early age, and his generosity in restoring a beautiful Spanish lady to her husband and friends, are celebrated by Polybius, Livy, Valerius, Maximus, and others.

Milton, in *Paradise Regained*, says—

“Remember the Pellean conqueror,  
A youth, how all the beauties of the East  
He slightly viewed, and slightly overpass'd;  
How he surnamed of Africa, dismissed,  
In his prime youth, the fair Iberian maid.”

This alludes to Alexander's continence and clemency to Darius's Queen and daughters, and the other Persian ladies, whom he took captive after the battle of Issus.

3. Plato compared Socrates to the gallipots of the Athenian apothecaries, on the outside of which were paint-

ed the grotesque figures of owls and apes ; but they contained within precious balsams. Nature had given him the face of a sensualist ; and, according to himself, the exterior expression agreed with the natural licentiousness of his character and disposition. A physiognomist, in examining his countenance, observed, that it indicated a most depraved and immodest mind ; quite contrary to the life and character of that great moralist. Socrates candidly confessed as much, but added, that he had conquered all his natural propensities by strength of reason and resolution. The countenance of the sensualist—which could not be changed—indicated the man by nature ; but it was no true mark, or representation, of his subsequent character ; the best of men, and one of the greatest moralists of all antiquity. Perhaps the remarkable conquest of himself, and the insight it gave of human nature, was the real cause of that practical system of morals which distinguishes him from all other philosophers. In himself he had a living proof to what a high state of virtue a man might reach, however naturally depraved and licentious, by the proper training of the mind. He was not so blind as to overlook what most speculative, or theoretical, philosophers have done ; that the conduct of men in society is of far higher importance, than the triumph or prevalence of any particular system.

4. We have no desire to be unnecessarily harsh upon the manners of society in present times ; but from all we know, we cannot help believing that modesty and chastity among men are virtues in very low repute. Why it is so we leave to deeper moralists to explain. But we cannot but express our surprise at the fact, when we consider how decided is the tone of the Christian religion on this

point. Why should the Christian be less scrupulous than the heathen? Why has the superior, nay divine code of morals, less influence than the casual precepts, or the examples of the ancients? Why should mere human and uncertain systems of philosophy, offspring of reason, as weak and variable, have more influence over the lives and conduct of men than one of divine original, perfect in all its parts? The only answer we can give is, that there are many professing Christians, but few genuine ones.

5. A breach of chastity is not only sinful in a religious view; but, in consideration of its consequences, it is a great crime against society. The evils it entails are acknowledged; its contagious influence is deeply felt; the scenes of depravity, and vice, and misery, to which it leads, come within the experience of every one. If those scenes of wickedness were unknown among Christians—calling themselves, in the fulness of their pride, enlightened, civilized Christians,—and the knowledge of their existence was discovered in some distant land benighted by ignorance and idolatry, what should we think? If we were all purity, all modesty, all perfection, and prided ourselves on such acquisitions; and some traveller told us a sad tale of prostitution existing in some country not before known, what should we say? We would attribute it to want of the Christian religion; to the inborn depravity of human nature; to the worship of idols; to ignorance, or some such cause; and all our warm sympathies would immediately stimulate us, at great labour and great expense, to send out embassies and missions to that country, to suppress or mitigate an evil hateful to God and to man. Yet the worst scenes the imagination can depict are not far from our own doors; the cancer is in our own breast,

gnawing and corrupting the wretched victim, and perpetuating evils incalculable to distant generations.

There is around us more depravity, more licentiousness, than can be conceived of any savage country, though Christianity be our professed religion; though there be churches in every street, a richly endowed hierarchy, and priests of God not excelled in numbers in any country we know of.

If all such influences, constantly acting on society, have failed to root out this crying evil—disgraceful to a Christian country, how can we, humble in our calling, hope to have any power?

6. There is something beautiful and captivating in modesty. We may call it the *veil* which nature has provided to cover those passions and appetites that are common to us with the brute creation. Though animals cannot properly be called modest, there is a decency belonging to them which may be considered a substitute for modesty in man.

In the female character it is of all virtues the most graceful and captivating; like the oriental veil worn to hide the exterior form of woman, it conceals many virtues, but shews beauty off to the greatest advantage. Chastity and modesty in woman are virtues that cannot, even in thought, be separated. The perfection of her character depends entirely upon those two admirable qualities; without them all other accomplishments, all other virtues, seem worthless in the sight of men. We can pardon want of understanding, ungracefulness of manners, and many other deficiencies, but never a breach of chastity. And this chiefly because experience shews, that when a woman has once lost those safeguards of the mind—modesty and chas-

tity—she has lost what makes a woman lovely and desirable; and when these are gone, the integrity of her character is destroyed, and she becomes a wreck. There seems to be no degrees in the vice and licentiousness of women: when they once fall, that fatal step generally is but the prelude to a plunge into the lowest abyss of infamy and disgrace. Because society has stamped its awful verdict on immodesty; and when they infringe the dire decree they are themselves conscious of disgrace, and rush on from recklessness to ruin. They become the outcasts of society; no sympathy is felt for them; no forgiving hand is held out to pardon and reclaim; no hope is left of a restoration to confidence or respect; despair and abandonment are the consequences of their guilt; neglected by all the world; rejected by their kindred; outcasts from friends and society; despised by their own sex, they plunge headlong into the extremes of vice, and try to forget their condition in the pleasures of dissipation and profligacy.

Thus hard and unrelenting is the fate of woman. If the consequences of immodesty be such, how valuable must chastity appear to her; if the penalties of vice be so dreadful, what mighty interest has she to guard a virtue valued at such a price?

7. The mere outward show of modesty is not enough. It may be but a garment to conceal our vices; but a cloak to hide our hypocrisy. To be modest, in the only true moral sense, we must be pure in our thoughts; the purity of our inward nature must be conformable to the external show; in a word, we must not only be pure to ourselves, but modest in the eye of God; who cannot be deceived by the thin film of hypocrisy that conceals our frailties or vices

from the observation of men. He, beholding even to the deepest recesses of our being, knows our nature ; the strength of our passions ; the weakness of our power of resistance ; and may often see reason to forgive, where ignorant and uncharitable man would harshly condemn. If we do all we can to abide by the dictates of reason and religion, we have less to fear from God than we have from our own species. In the great trial of the passions, how little can one man know of his fellow ? What deep mystery is there, in that incessant conflict of passion with reason ? Day after day may the enemy besiege our walls ; day after day we may resist, struggle, and defend ; but we cannot always expect to come off victorious. Such cases of misfortune may damp our philosophy, and throw a shade over our virtue, but let us not take it too much to heart. Sometimes a defeat may be the incentive to renewed energies and greater vigilance.

“ Virtue may be assailed, but never hurt ;  
Surprised by unjust force, but not enthrall’d.”

## ON SELF-EXAMINATION.

~~~~~

Symbol XXXV,—*Herbam molochen serito, ne tamen mandito.*
Sow mallows, but never eat them.

~~~~~


1. IF the excellent and sublime principles of morals, enforced by ancient and modern teachers, and eminently in the New Testament, require every disciple to forget and forgive injuries, and be tender and charitable to all men; they do not indulge us in self-love's syren song,—“Be also mild and forgiving to yourself.” On the contrary, the meaning of the symbol is universally inculcated, as an essential moral duty,—“Use mildness to others, but never to yourself. Pardon all things in other men, but nothing in yourself.”

That this is the true signification, may be inferred from the use of the word “mallow,” which in the Greek original is *μαλακος*, *soft*; and from which is also derived our word *mellow*. The plant was likewise believed to have some peculiar emollient properties.

2. Self-examination is necessary in every one who would reach the summit of virtue and moral rectitude. This was acknowledged by that profound ancient philosopher (profound in knowledge of human nature, and of himself), who laconically said, *nosce teipsum*, *know thyself*;

and maintained, that in those two simple words was comprised all necessary knowledge ; and that rigid self-examination, therefore, was the basis of all true virtue in man. To know ourselves is the best wisdom ; to examine and inquire into our own nature ; our capacities ; our virtues ; our secret vices ; our weaknesses, is the only mode of bringing chaos to form and harmony. We must first know our defects, before we can cure them ; know our sins, before we can root them out. And, therefore, Pythagoras, in the *Golden Verses* ascribed to him, advises us to adopt some such systematic and categorical practice as the following :—" Never allow sleep to close your eye-lids after going to bed, till you have examined in a calm and rational manner all the actions of the day. And say, Wherein have I done amiss ? What have I done ? What have I omitted that I ought to have done ; If in this examination you discover yourself to have done amiss, reprimand yourself severely for it ; and if you have done any good, rejoice."

3. To say that "*nosce teipsum*" comprises all necessary knowledge, may appear to some hyperbolical and overstrained, as some visionary empirics, or pretending knaves, give one remedy for all diseases, and discover an *elixir vitæ*, or mysterious agency, in the simplest products of nature. But if we for a moment consider the true end of knowledge, we shall coincide in the truth of this ancient remark. For what is the true end of knowledge ? not mere possession, as the miser imagines to be the true end of riches ; but, as riches, an instrument by which to gain, or purchase, some other good. Knowledge, then, of itself, is of no value ; when not employed for some good or laudable purpose, it is profitless. It may be possessed without





a single spark of virtue, and then may become a powerful agent in engendering evil and wickedness. The moral attributes of the devil were eclipsed by his fall from heaven ; but we are not told that his knowledge was lost, as well as his virtue. It may lie in the brain a confused mass of " learned lumber," an *indigesta moles*, and then it is equally without value.

But the knowledge of ourselves must be profitable and desirable, if it lead us to practise virtue and avoid vice ; and it will comprise all *necessary* knowledge, if the end it aims at be the perfection of the soul, and the consequent happiness of the individual. That this is the end and aim of self-examination, and the excellence of self-knowledge, is not to be doubted, when we shall consider whether it be the good or bad, the virtuous or vicious, who resort to this practice in the conduct of life. It is a penance and mortification never to be practised, but by those who would suffer much that is unpleasant, and endure many hardships, for a future good. The bad look only to present gratification, and will not, nor dare not, damp their pleasures by stopping to inquire as to the consequences of them ; nor dare they calmly recall their actions, or reflect on them, or search their hearts, or examine themselves, for such a duty is not one of pleasure, nor would any one undertake it, who was not seriously inclined for a reformation.

4. The good desire to pass through this trial, or ordeal, for the advantages alone to be obtained by it ; as man is said to pass a fabled purgatory, in order to be purified and made fit for heaven. He who eagerly pants after the good, and is satisfied that the only way to reform the heart, is to examine and know it well, will not hesitate to

subject himself to the most rigid inspection. For the end he has in view is worthy of the trial; and, when passed, he will have discovered what is the true end of all learning and all knowledge; what alone can be profitable to him here, in reference to hereafter,—the knowledge of his own soul, which leads, as Milton says, “to know God, and out of that knowledge to love him, and to imitate him, as we may the nearest, by possessing our soul of true virtue.” And if this be the consequence of self-knowledge, or if all the knowledge we possess terminates in this, what more can be desired? Can any other knowledge whatever be necessary, which has not these great objects for its end,—knowledge of God, the love of God, the imitation of God, and the practice of virtue?

5. What is more deceitful than the human heart? Like the most soothing flatterer, it ever proclaims our virtues, but carefully conceals our vices. It throws a veil over its own wickedness, and comes before us clothed like an angel of light. In the attitude of virtue it presents itself, but with much of the boldness and impudence of vice; for, while we cannot conceal our secret sins, it smiles upon us, and pretends they are venial, and not worth condemnation. Other vices, not so glaring, of which we are guilty, are carefully hidden, and can only be discovered by a strict examination, in which the heart throws off the veil of disguise, and appears in all its naked deformity. What we mistook for a friend and monitor, proves to be the greatest enemy, the greatest of deceivers.

6. Evil, like a bad habit, grows upon us unawares. Like subtle poison, it creeps into our system, and we are sometimes only sensible of its existence, when it has brought us to the verge of the grave. The nature of man

is to lessen the magnitude and importance of evil; he is constantly being deceived, and often willingly; and when sin comes in the persuasive and insinuating address it assumes, he is thrown off his guard, and falls into the snare, if he has not carefully watched himself, and examined himself.

7. Virtue, to be possessed unsullied, must be carefully watched; as studiously as the maiden's modesty, which, as it is said, ought not to be unmasked even to the moon. The conscience is an excellent sentinel, but it often slumbers, and lets enemies enter the citadel, which, when they are observed, surprise us; but we discover with what extreme difficulty and courage they are to be ejected. When a vigilant eye is not kept on the conscience, or sentinel of the mind, he is apt to become callous and indifferent to the importance of his trust; and when, from time to time, he admits evil spirits into the stronghold of our virtue, and finds they are not expelled, but cherished and indulged as friends, then at length he revels at his post, becomes bold and impudent, and finally betrays our souls. We are told the devil is ever watching for such opportunities to enter and entrap us in his designs. If we give way to sleep, he is ever awake, ever vigilant, ever ready to devour; and he watches more perseveringly the lapses and weaknesses of the virtuous, because his triumph is so much the greater, and his pleasure so much the more.

8. We all know how easy it is to fall into evil, or into the hands of the evil-one; but we hardly can tell how difficult it is to release ourselves, till we come to know it by actual experience. In the poetical language of Virgil, the

descent to hell is smooth and easy, but to regain the skies is a task not to be accomplished by all.

It is, according to the French proverb, "*Le premier pas qui coute,*" for when once the barriers of virtue and innocence are broken down, our security is lost, the insidious foe enters ; and being overcome, we resign ourselves to him, abandon all that is worthy of being preserved, and in the end are thrown into a prison, or sold into slavery. One step in guilt leads on to another ; each degree we sink downwards leads to a lower ; every sin tarnishes the lustre of the soul, the sensibility of the heart to evil ; each sin deadens the conscience, till at length we become familiarized to the horrors of crime and deformity of guilt. It is when man reaches this state of hardened criminality, that the innocent shudder at his atrocities, little conceiving that their pure nature is capable of the same rapid descent from the image of God. For it is not by a single leap that the human soul falls into this depth of iniquity.

9. The best antidote we can offer is continual self-examination ; we must watch our virtues and our inclinations, our passions and desires, with as much vigilance and perseverance, as the miser watches his hoards of treasure. But if we are inflexibly just and severe to ourselves, which the precept enjoins, we cannot exercise the same severity towards another, because there is this great difference (calling upon us to be charitable and mild), that we cannot judge of others as we can judge of ourselves ; whatever clear and intimate knowledge self-examination may yield us of our own internal nature, we have no means of acquiring such knowledge of other beings. This is the province of God alone, who says, " judge not lest ye be

judged;" for no other can scan the secret operations of the soul; no one but him can know the motives to action, the weakness of man, or the temptations which surround him,—leading him on to guilt, and yet being a palliation of it. When we hastily judge, and as hastily condemn, He may pardon; where we conclude an action, attended with evil consequences, to spring from a bad motive, He may, by his all-seeing eye, discover it rather to be an error of judgment, than wickedness in the heart; and this proves how well it becomes us to be mild, charitable, and compassionate; for who dare ascend the judgment-seat of the Almighty?

10. If this be true of minor things, of affairs purely earthly, such as the conduct of man in society, in a public or private station, it is equally true as regards the greater matters of religion, or duty of man to God. In this each individual can judge for himself; but what presumption is it to assume the high prerogative of his Maker, and pass censure and condemnation on others? How dare this impious worm of the earth, frail and sinful as he is, pretend to judge of those secrets of the human breast, which can only be known to God? If religion be an affair between man and his Maker, how dare he pride himself on his perfection, and the infallibility of his belief, and pass harsh and uncharitable decrees against others differing from himself? Yet how true is it, that, in all times, men have presumed to wield the prerogative of the Almighty? They have in almost every period of history (records of human crime and imbecility) disgraced the very name of religion, and mutually persecuted each other on points of faith, engendering passions and feelings

nearer allied to the devil than to God ; the dogmas of one age have been condemned by the next ; the true religion of one period has become false and dangerous in the one succeeding ; the heretics of one faith are the saints and martyrs of another ; and if men had not languished and become weary of the endless strife, or wiser by experience, hardly a human being would have been left to record the deeds and inextinguishable hatred of pious zealots. To enchain the human mind, and bring it to the subjection of rival parties, creeds were formed, and dogmas enforced, as if man could believe what was forced upon him, or give a willing assent to what his reason rebelled against and denied. The absurdity, if not impossibility, of bringing all minds to think in the same way, could not be obvious to those who enforced torture as the best cure for unbelief. If argument and reason cannot change our faith, how can physical pain or bodily torture affect it ?

11. The endless contentions of the world upon religious dogmas is a proof how little of infallibility there is in human opinion, and how fruitless it is to force our own peculiar views upon others. The contemplation of the diversities of creeds, and modes of thinking upon religious matters, ought to make us charitable and forbearing, and excite our diffidence, if not commiseration, in all deductions of human reason.

But, instead of resting peaceably in this melancholy truth, contented with our own form of faith, we are all too ready to fall back on our infallibility, and shut the gates of heaven against those who will not go thither agreeably to our opinions. What would become of man if the God of his religion resembled the professor of it ?

It is not, therefore, without reason that the learned Sir Thomas Browne observes, " while the mercies of God do promise us heaven, our opinions and conceits exclude each other from that place. \* \* \* And thus we go to heaven against each other's will, conceits, and opinions, and with as much charity as ignorance do err, I fear, in points not only of our own, but one another's salvation."

## ON FLATTERY.

~~~~~

Symbol XXXV—*Sedem olio ne abstergito.*
Spill not oil upon the seat.

~~~~~

1. LORD BACON somewhere says, that “ many have so debased their wits and pens, as to turn (as saith *Du Bartas*) Hecuba into Helena, and Faustina into Lucretia ; *i. e.* describing an old woman as young and beautiful, and a notorious profligate as a paragon of virtue.” Yet this great philosopher falls into the very same error himself in writing to that monarch, who made wisdom foolish, and learning ridiculous ; who had an impediment in his speech, without the perseverance of a Demosthenes to overcome it ; and whose eloquence, therefore, must have been as absurd as his wisdom. “ Your Majesty’s manner of speech,” he writes, “ is indeed prince-like, flowing as from a fountain, and yet streaming and branching into nature’s order, full of facility and felicity, imitating none, and inimitable of any.”

It is said, at a certain court in Europe all the courtiers were observed to wear their heads upon their shoulders, in such a manner as to imitate a natural defect in the monarch ; and others have been seen to limp, talk, and laugh, after the fashion of their superiors. The Persians,



says Plutarch, love them most who are hawk-nosed, and esteem them best favoured, for no other reason but that Cyrus had such a nose. The Chinese are notorious for their hyperbolical flattery to their emperors, as, Light of Reason, Eye of Knowledge, Descendant or Offspring of the Sun, and such like pompous titles. A petty Tartar king, who believed himself to be the Sovereign of sovereigns, after he had dined according to his own brutal fashion, arose, and with condescending courtesy gave permission to all other monarchs on earth to follow his example.

2. Perhaps the most contemptible kind of flattery is to make virtues of men's vices, or beauties of their defects; because falsehood is the foundation of it. Men as bad as a Nero or Caligula have not been wanting in friends to extol their good qualities. Women in high stations, without a single beauty of person, find many flatterers to admire and praise what does not exist. To monarchs powers have been indirectly attributed which it would be impious to ascribe to any thing human, as the answer to the simple question of a queen to a courtier—"What is the time?" "What time your Majesty pleases."

3. When Telemachus descended into hell in search of his father Ulysses, Mentor pointed out more kings than he was prepared to expect in such a place. This was a satire upon the vulgar notion that the station and respect paid to a monarch on earth can exempt him from the penalty of sin and indifference to God. The "anointed king" can no more escape the judgment of heaven, than he can escape the hand of death. If a courtier had written such a tale, perhaps he would have carried his flattery beyond the grave, and politely exempted kings and people of rank from the doom that shall befall the wicked

in any station of life. In fact, the idea is already carried out in practice, for no courtier, or flatterer, would intimate the possibility of the great being mixed up with the vulgar, either in heaven or hell ; and we find that, as regards them, different words are used to convey the idea of death, perhaps that the mortification might be softened of their undergoing the same common fate and certain corruption to which the meanest of God's creatures are subject.

4. The philosopher Bion being asked what animal he thought the most hurtful? replied—"That of wild creatures a tyrant, and of tame ones a flatterer." The flatterer is the most dangerous enemy we can have: Raleigh, himself a courtier, and therefore initiated into the whole art of flattery, who discovered in his own career and fate its dangerous and deceptive power, its deep artifice and deeper falsehood, says,—“A flatterer is said to be a beast that biteth smiling. But it is hard to know them from friends,—they are so obsequious and full of protestations; for as a wolf resembles a dog, so doth a flatterer a friend.”

5. Directly or indirectly, the origin of flattery is in self-interest. Its source is, therefore, as base as can be. Of all vices it is the most hollow, capricious, and inconsistent. It only lasts as long as we believe the object of it can subserve our purposes. Whenever that ceases, praise is turned to slander; sweetness becomes gall and wormwood. How often do we find men turning away from the setting, and worship the rising sun! “*Plures adorant solem orientem quam occidentem vel meridianum!*”

6. If we have a true and modest estimate of ourselves, we cannot but loathe the false praises of flattery; and despise the person who will descend to such an abject falsehood. However, there are few who have formed this

true estimate, and the self-love and self-esteem of men lay them open to the seducing pleasure of flattery. How few are there who can withstand its syren strains, its dulcet music ! Few indeed who can resist " the fabling tongue of glozing courtesy." Most men love to have virtues and qualities ascribed to them, which they admire in others, but do not possess. Others, again, love to hear magnified what they do possess, or believe they have ; as the poet delights in the praises of his friends, however unmerited ; the author in the adulation of fulsome criticism ; the artist in the exclamations of partial friends, giving excellencies which he can never attain ; the woman secretly loves the man who pours into her willing ear the praises of beauty which nature has denied to her ; and others, all according to their tastes and desires. Even the kings of the earth and nobles are not indifferent to the soothing pleasure of flattery. They are surrounded by courtiers and hired flatterers,

" Who are the moths and scarabs of the state,  
The bane of empires, and the dregs of courts ;"

men whose daily business it is to distil this poison into their ears.

7. The pernicious effect of flattery is to lull the mind into a false security. We begin, by constant repetition, to believe we have perfections and excellencies to which we have no real title ; we cease to strive after what is substantially good ; and, as we are guided, blend vice and virtue, truth and falsehood, together. The flatterer himself becomes the hypocrite ; for, as we have said, the source of flattery is to be found in self-interest ; it is part of his system to conform, at least in outward show, to the opinions and prejudices of those whom he flatters. So

that both are placed in a false position ; the one deceives, the other is the deceiver. The human heart is weak and vain enough to fall into the snare laid for it ; the flatterer can find in every one a chord which he may touch with impunity ; and rarely does it happen that he receives a frown for a smile.

8. To offer up incense to the great, and praise, and gloze, and flatter, when we can find nothing to admire or respect, but, what is oftener true, much to hate and despise, is a sure mark of an abject spirit. There is in such conduct so little of honesty, so little of independence, that we may rank the flatterer among moral cowards—the most contemptible of cowards. Generally, he will be found to tyrannize over those beneath him, in just proportion to his slavish submission to his superiors.

9. If we find flatterers in the world who will give us virtues and perfections we cannot justly claim, we shall discover an equally dangerous one in our own breast—the still small voice of self-love attuning our praises, and lulling the mind into a fatal security. The *self-flatterer* has a more deadly enemy to wrestle with than the former one,—

“ Self-love never yet would look on Truth,  
But with blear'd beams ; slick Flattery and she  
Are twin-born sisters, and so mix their eyes,  
As, if you sever one, the other dies.”

We believe there is nothing more inimical to virtue and true greatness of mind than those weaknesses coming under the heads of self-love, self-esteem, self-conceit, and such like. We shall find that, in proportion as these vices prevail, there is an indifference to all that is good and great ; a negative, or inactive kind of virtue, worse for the soul than actual positive vice itself. In such there is felt no

admiration for what is great and excellent ; no aspiration of the soul towards the good ; no vestige of ardour or enthusiasm in any one thing ; but a cold phlegmatic indifference to vice, as well as to virtue ; arising from every emotion, every sentiment, centering and finding its ultimate end in the being itself. Whether the state of being without virtue—a mere negation—a thing without a soul—is as bad, morally speaking, as indulging in vice, is a question we shall not enter upon here ; but this we are sure of, that self-flattery is a vice of a deep dye, placing in peril any virtue we may possess, and in the end rooting up every thing noble that appertains to the human mind.

10. Humility is the essence of all true greatness. But what can be more opposite to humility than self-love ? They cannot possibly exist in the same person. As regards knowledge, its attainment and possession by man, wisest is he who has the humility to confess, that all his knowledge of things, has only convinced him of the knowledge of his own ignorance. There is a limit to our faculties ; time itself is but short ; but knowledge is infinite. What words can convey so much truth, wisdom, and genuine humility, as the memorable ones of Newton, in which he compares himself to a child gathering pebbles on the sea-shore, while the great ocean of Truth lay all undiscovered before him. As of knowledge—the illimitable extent of which is more obvious to the learned than to the ignorant,—“ who is happy that he knows no more ;” so, the same may be said of virtue ; for perfection is so hopelessly beyond our reach, that we must be blinded by self-flattery indeed, if we think we have good in us worthy of praise or approbation. What little we have amounts only to a single ray, by whose faint light we become painfully

conscious to the chaos of evil, from whose dark recesses it breaks forth. The self-love that can find satisfaction in the corruption in which it is engendered ; and magnify that ray of goodness to a sun ; and rejoice complacently in an imaginary idea of perfection ; places the soul in a lamentable and dangerous state ; as regards our duties here, and, more especially, in connection with the welfare of the soul hereafter. Then—

“ Beware of flattery ; 'tis a flow'ry weed,  
Which oft offends the very idol vice,  
Whose shrine it would perfume.”

# THROW NOT PEARLS BEFORE SWINE.

~~~~~  
Symbol XXXVII.—*Ne cibum in matellam injicito.*
Put not meat into a foul vessel.
 ~~~~~

1. A FOUL vessel, or as it is in the Greek, ἀμύς, is used here in an analogous sense to *vessels of dishonour*, by St Paul, in his *Epistle to the Romans*. The identical meaning of the symbol may be found in those words of Christ,—‘*throw not pearls before swine*,’—probably a proverbial expression among the Jews. Pythagoras used to say, “every sort of wood is not fit to make a Mercury;” and Lord Bacon enjoins us “not to give Æsop’s cock a gem, who would be better pleased and happier if he had a barley-corn.”

• 2. The injunction conveyed in the precept, and whose soundness and propriety is confirmed by Christ himself—a yet higher authority than even the Samian philosopher—is one that is wholly disregarded in the opinions and practice of the present day. Knowledge is cried aloud in the streets; the profoundest truths of nature are made common and familiar; her awful veil is lifted up with indecency and irreverence; the doctrines of Christianity, beyond the reach of human intellect, are repeated by children and ignorant men, as they repeat their fables and youthful tales;

every thing, in fact, high and sacred, holy and divine, is exposed freely to the public gaze, till men make familiar with the name of God and those truths he has but partially disclosed to the mind of man. That deep solemnity and religious awe common to even pagan superstition and idolatry, are unknown to us. With children whose minds are yet untutored in reason, and whose understandings but comprehend the outward and tangible objects of daily experience, we are more zealous in forcing upon them dogmas of theology than such simple practical wisdom as is compatible with their early years. And so do we act with the ignorant also ; for we would rather hear an audible pledge to one mysterious doctrine of religion repeated without any clear idea annexed to it, than prepare the soil for the growth of that seed which cannot grow on barren land. Above all, we most undoubtedly violate the injunction in throwing the pearls of truth, whether sacred or profane, before those who only condemn and deride our efforts for their conversion and improvement. To attempt to teach any man religion who knows not what is moral obligation, is to commence at the wrong end. To impart to him knowledge who is devoid of capacity to understand, is as absurd as to plant corn, and expect a harvest, when we have neglected to prepare the soil ; to diffuse the Gospel (not its simple precepts, but theologic doctrines) among a people without an idea above animal life, will inevitably bring religion into contempt, as we find is the case among savage nations, to whom we have zealously given the light of truth, where no education has previously prepared the mind for its reception.

3. In those countries of simplicity and barbarism, where a string of beads, or a rusty piece of iron, is es-



teemed of more value than precious stones, or gold and silver, how useless is it to teach them the greater value of the things they despise ! After Lycurgus had in practice shewn the artificial value to which any thing may be brought—as his own currency—how absurd would it have been for any one to have attempted a demonstration of the superior value of gold and silver, metals which to the Spartans were valueless, because they were of no use ! So to the man putting no value on morality, virtue, or religion—who can find no pleasure in their practice or under their restraint—it is waste of time to throw pearls of great price before him, and begin to teach before we have prepared his mind. The first step in teaching truth to a mature mind, is to weed out the errors and prejudices he has, in his ignorance, contracted, as a mathematician prepares the way to demonstration by axioms and self-evident propositions.

4. In teaching the principles of their school, or, in other words, in initiating disciples into the mysteries of philosophy, the Pythagoreans, as well as some others, adopted the principle of gradually preparing the mind for the reception of those truths and doctrines which cannot but with irreverence be taught to one wallowing in the wilderness of natural reason, and the gross errors of the uninstructed intellect. No easy task was it found to pass the ordeal of these initiatory rites ; so difficult a thing is it to break in the natural mind to the lofty principles of reason, and render it capable (the capacity of a god in comparison) to comprehend and appreciate the grand and overwhelming truths discoverable in nature and in philosophy. And in their scheme, we are convinced, they followed the soundest views of right reason and common

sense as regards the rudimentary principle of education. It is, in truth, a far easier task to vindicate their system (if we were so inclined) than to defend or justify the system of modern times.

5. The principles of philosophy (which may be said to comprehend every conceivable subject reducible to system) were regarded by antiquity with that deep reverence which became the enunciation of truths that were coeval with the foundation of the world; which were originally from the universal Mind, and not the mere offspring of erring intellect. There is not a law of nature (so called) however common and familiar, that does not in the mind of the philosopher give being to contemplations which partake of the solemnity and awfulness of religious truth. The idea of God is an idea essentially magnificent, soul-elevating, awful, solemn; but every thing the work of his hands, or offspring of his Supreme intelligence, partakes also of the same solemn and sublime idea. It is not every one, however, who can feel those emotions that fill the breast of the contemplative philosopher, when meditating first on God, and then on his works, all wonderful and mysterious. It is only he who has been in a manner initiated into the school of philosophy that can comprehend the true principles of science, and be sensible to the emotions called into being by the grandeur of eternal truth. This incapacity of the vulgar to enter into the solemn and awful truths of religion—namely, the doctrines on which it rests—was the cause of the *double* religion of ancient countries; of an esoteric and exoteric, internal and external, material and spiritual system; the one for the wise and learned, the other for the common and vulgar capacity. Though this two-fold system may be denied to exist in the

Christian religion, who can doubt that it actually exists, and is carried out in the minds of different professors? Who can doubt, that while some have no loftier idea of their religion than a pure system of morals, others behold in it a vast, sublime, and profound system, all perfect and harmonious as the world of nature? God shines forth with even greater glory in this spiritual, than he does in the natural or material world. And, indeed, who can doubt of the real existence of the esoteric and exoteric in Christianity? No one who has capacity to enter into its spirit. In the exoteric or moral system all is clear, simple, manifest, even to the lowest intellect. Is it thus with the esoteric or spiritual system? Here we find awful and mysterious doctrines only partially disclosed; some only alluded to, others only to be inferred. We discover in it broken links of a chain (which we cannot collect and put together with any usefulness, as there are many belonging to it which we never can discover), which we may be certain are part of the great circle of spiritual truth. If Pythagoras taught his disciples the doctrines of his philosophy in a way comprehensible to their minds, we find it is not so with Christ; he only partially discloses his great principles or truths, as if the human intellect were not yet prepared to receive them in all their glory and magnificence.

Though the esoteric, secret, or spiritual part of the Christian religion be only in part divulged to man (the perfect manifestation to come in another life), it cannot be doubted that a clearer understanding may be had of some truths by the reflecting and contemplative mind, than can be enjoyed by the narrow-minded and ignorant; as, for example, the workings of the Almighty in the ex-

ternal world are more manifest and better defined by one who has profoundly and patiently studied the laws of nature, than by one who only obscurely perceives the results, without any reference to the chain of causes. Therefore in religion, as well as in science and philosophy, man may, by study and meditation, obtain clearer views; in a word, he may obtain a deep insight into the spiritual, as well as the material kingdom, by the exercise of his higher faculties. If in the religious system he finds mysteries, and stumbles upon obstacles which reason cannot overcome; if he discovers great doctrines only partially disclosed, or veiled in mysterious language, or clothed in types, symbols, and metaphors, these are difficulties which he more or less meets with in the world of matter.

6. If the profoundest and most inquiring spirit, humble withal, and deeply conscious of the finite nature of human reason, finds such obstacles and difficulties in all things created, in every doctrine revealed, we may see how absurd it is to propose such subjects in any systematic form, to intellects infinitely inferior—to minds rioting in all the wildness of nature.

As regards practical virtues, we must clean and purify the vessel first, before we put meat into it, *i. e.*, we must make a man understand what virtue is, make him love and respect it, see the advantages attending it, before we can hope to see our seed grow up and flourish; otherwise, we only cast pearls before swine.

Let this be a preface to that which is to follow.

ON GOD-REVERENCE, IDOLATRY, AND  
SUPERSTITION.

~~~~~  
Symbol XXXVII.—*In annulo imaginem Dei ne circumferto.*
Wear not the image of God on your ring.
~~~~~

1. It was a practice among the Romans of later times, when they were enslaved and corrupted by their emperors, to wear images of deified princes on their rings. Moreover, the law considered it a capital crime to carry that sacred image into any infamous or unholy place, in order to protect and secure the Divine majesty represented by it from any insult. Caracalla is said, on the authority of Dion, to have condemned to death a young man of the equestrian order, because he was found in a scandalous place with a piece of money in his pocket having the likeness of that prince on it. It has been thought from this practice that Pythagoras, in the symbol, meant to convey an injunction against wearing images of God on the finger; because we might be brought into such situations as to offend the majesty of the image, and indirectly give insult to God himself. A better interpretation is given by Dacier, who says, "We ought not profane the name of God by speaking of him at every turn, and before all the world."

2. But it is probable that Pythagoras, having just no-

tions of the incomprehensibility of the Godhead, deemed it profanity to embody him under any visible image whatsoever. He may have also deemed it absurd in the highest degree to attempt, by a material type, to represent what is purely spiritual. If it be an absurdity, even in thought, to give form and shape to the soul of man, it must be, by comparison, extremely foolish and more absurd to circumscribe the Eternal Being within any imaginary limits we may choose to prescribe. Flame, fire, ether, and other such like objects, we find used to represent the human soul; not as fanciful images or types, but as bearing a strong resemblance to the nature and action of the soul. Now, an idea of this kind must originate either in the narrow faculties of the mind, which can conceive nothing of the mode of being or essential properties of a spiritual nature, and for this reason the action of spirit is so described in Scripture as an *afflatus* or breathing; or in the preposterous notion, that spirit is a kind of attenuated matter—matter in its purest form, as air, or flame, or ether; as if there was actually a point where matter could resolve itself into spirit; *i. e.*, if the flame of ether resembles spirit, because ether is considered pure matter, then it may be inferred that other matter still more pure and refined may actually be spirit. In such a way does the mind get involved in the maze and labyrinth of materialism, by using material objects to represent spiritual ones. However pure matter may be, it must still be matter, and, in comparison with spirit, is as darkness to light; in every conceivable state of refinement the line of demarcation must be as far distant as ever. All efforts of the imagination to conjure up the real nature of a spirit are abortive, and end in confusion and discomfiture; the most

subtilized form of matter, heat and electricity, bring us no nearer to spirit than any ponderous metal, which at one time appears the densest of matter, but at another it may dissolve into liquidity, or dissipate or sublimize into "thin air."

3. As we cannot conceive a spirit to exist without a body; and the only body, in our estimation, fit for the embodiment of spirit being the human, men, in the grossness of their imaginations, if not in the impiety of their minds, have actually represented the Supreme Being to us in this ignoble shape. The "Ancient of Days" appears as an old man with silvery locks, a long beard, and a benignant countenance, and shaggy eye-brows, and deep-set eyes, all marks and certain tokens of mortality and decay! Wiser were they who of old painted divine Apollo ever fair and ever young. But even if we could, though indistinctly, convey an idea of the "Ancient of Days" by an old man, and the benevolence of His being by a human countenance expressive of goodness and benevolence, how can we pourtray His almighty power, creative energy, or his omniscient wisdom?

The very same propensity to embody the Eternal Spirit, leads us also to think of his power as a physical manifestation; and in the exercise of which, it is conceived, an effort, or energizing force, is made, and in which his presence is necessary. And this because our own effects on matter are produced through physical agency. All such efforts clearly imply weakness, and not strength. The mysterious power of the electric fluid, and more than gigantic force of heat, in its expansive influence on the densest bodies, itself being imponderable, may satisfy us that, in the greatest efforts of nature, no visible or perceptible ener-

gy is necessary. The greatest power is the most silent in its operations. We are not, indeed, sensible of the power at all, till it becomes manifest in its results ; and then we confound the effect with the cause, for when the power becomes known to us, it is spent, and its work is over.

4. Though most ancient nations painted and engraved images of their lower divinities, they escaped (what we have not) embodying the Supreme Spirit of the universe. This spirit was not enumerated in the catalogue of the popular gods, and perhaps his existence was unrecognised by the great body of the people ; nevertheless, he was an object of the deepest mystery and veneration to the priesthood and some philosophers. *Cneph*, or the supreme spirit of the Egyptians, was perhaps adopted by Pythagoras, as we have reason to believe that he acknowledged another being above the Soul of the World,—a pure spirit, the universal and eternal nature, the source of all being. The same mystery as to the secret and incommunicable name of this deity is found in both ; the same sublime, though erroneous, idea of his freedom from all human sympathies, and exaltation above all sublunary things.

5. The origin of all idolatry is to be found in this practice of embodying spiritual natures ; and perhaps on this ground also, Pythagoras forbids us wearing engraven images of the Deity. In our better notions of God, it is impious to worship Him—whom the universe cannot contain—under any idol or form whatever. But over and above this criminality, there is engendered in the mind, by idolatry, a degree of weakness and superstition, which tends to debase and materialize our conceptions of God ; and which at length will bring us to worship him in abject servitude and fear, rather than with love and holy adora-



tion. Hence we find some nations have tremblingly fallen before an unfashioned log of wood, a shapeless stone, the eccentric root of a tree, or especially such things in the formation of which nature seems to have deviated from her ordinary course; others have paid homage and pompous worship to living creatures weaker than themselves, to crawling reptiles, to the very lowest species of animated nature; others, or the same, at any usual or necessary manifestation of nature's power, as in thunder, lightning, or in the earthquake, have felt their hearts sink within them in terror, at the supposed anger and desolating fury of an evil being, and have rushed to temples to appease him with every show of abject fear and superstitious humility. The worship which debases the mind, instead of exalting it, must be founded on error. Idolatry of every kind, whether partaking of the wayward superstition of Egypt, or the more refined and poetical idolization of Greece, or the more ridiculous creature-worship of present times, more or less has this effect, and must be condemned.

6. As we have advanced in civilization, idolatry and superstition have declined; but although this may be the fruits of civilization in Christian countries, it does not seem to have been the rule in ancient pagan nations. The animal worship of Egypt was at its height, when Egypt was the most civilized country of the world, when it boasted of its wealth, power, and learning. The more primitive nations were in their manners (when they simply cultivated the land, or bred flocks of sheep and oxen, and spread themselves in tribes over the face of the earth), the less degraded were they in their religious rites. It was when they formed themselves into large communities, or cities, that they fell into the lowest depths of superstition;

when, at the same time, considerable advances were made in the arts, and in most branches of polite learning. In the open fields, men worshipped nature, or the stars of heaven; in the city, they adored all manner of creatures, the most weak, the most loathsome, the most contemptible.

7. What can be more melancholy than the superstition of Egypt? All the horrible details of their creature-worship cannot be read or studied without a deep-sinking of the mind; at the depths of infancy to which priestcraft and superstition reduced it. Many of their rites were ludicrous and whimsical in the extreme; but who can laugh, or be diverted, by descriptions that tend to degrade our species—that reduce man to the level of the brute, amid, and in spite of, all the advantages with which he is endowed? Conceive the immortal being—the only rational creature on earth—the image of God created—the soul thought worthy of redemption—offering homage and adoration, and deepest reverence, to a cat, a dog, an ox, an ibis, a crawling beetle, or other more disgusting reptile! In an Egyptian family, the death of a cat or dog created more sensation than the death of a child, a son, or daughter; it was the death of a god, at which they raised the cry of woe and lamentation; and in cutting off the eyebrow, or shaving the head, at the death of a cat, or funeral of a dog, they marked their sense of humility and abject fear at so awful an event. We can hardly be surprised that they sometimes scourged their bodies with a thong, when offering up an ox in sacrifice to Isis; as we have similar tokens of penance and humility in our own times; but who could have believed, if Herodotus, and other observers of Egyptian rites, had not assured us, that the priesthood, in commemorating the death of Osiris, whipped

a certain god for his misdeeds, whose name is not revealed.

The same historian says, that when a house was set on fire, the inmates were greatly alarmed by the propensity of their god-cats to rush into the flames. What mark of piety to save the life of a god, that could not save his own ! What true devotion to sacrifice a child in order to preserve a god ! No law could make it a crime to see a god perish, when he had a desire to destroy himself ; or when the most pious could not act the preserver though he willed ; but blood alone could atone for the intentional death of a cat ; it was a capital crime. If a hawk or ibis were even accidentally killed, the author was put to death by the multitude, without any form of law. To avoid suspicion of such a heinous act, when any one discovered the carcase of a god, he began forthwith to wail and lament. " A labourer," says Ælian, " employed in digging a trench in a vineyard, accidentally cut an asp in pieces by a blow of his spade. The man was so horrified at the dreadful impiety of what he supposed himself guilty, that he became frantic, and ran about imploring succour, fancying himself to be pursued by the angry reptile-god."

It is, moreover, said, that the Egyptians, on some occasions, tortured their gods ; and, when a great calamity occurred, they menaced them in some dark place ; and if they did not avert the evil, they were summarily put to death !

8. We cannot conceive on what grounds, or on what occasions, the use of images can be justified. The tendency of idolatry to superstition, makes it a dangerous practice in its mildest features. In the image, the mind is liable to forget at last the object it is intended to re-

present. If it be so in mere forms, rites, or ceremonies of religion, much more must it be in the use of visible and tangible things. The defence, that the use of images in religious worship is not idolatry, because the image is not worshipped as an image, but as the representative of something else, is a defence which every Egyptian could put up as plausibly as a (Christian) priest. In truth, such a defence from an Egyptian would have been better founded; because the origin and basis of his idolatry being a belief in a permeating soul of the world, when he worshipped any image or any animal, at the same time he conceived it to be the *locum tenens*, for the time being, of the divine nature. The reason why all animals were not so revered, was because some animals, more than others, betokened in a more conspicuous manner the working or presence of this spirit, or displayed in some way outward marks of divinity, or analogy to the divine nature. Some of the more scrupulous priests of Egypt, however, carried out the doctrine to its natural result, and abstained from all animal food, and deemed it impious to kill any creature whatever except in sacrifice.

The mortality of a god, as displayed in death, was not an object of surprise to an Egyptian. But it would naturally have been an object of great astonishment, if he had regarded the animal in any other light than as the mere abiding-place of the divine spirit, which was supposed to withdraw itself from the body, in order that it might pay the last and necessary tribute to nature. Those rites of sepulture which followed death were, no doubt, intended as marks of reverence for bodies that had been the temporary receptacles of the deity.

The Egyptian, therefore, worshipping an animal as be-

ing endued with an emanation of the Soul of the World, whose very presence, or implied presence, rendered it sacred, really acted on a higher and juster principle than those other idolaters who have worshipped idols, images, statues, and such like, without believing they were any thing else than types or representatives of the divine nature. Whatever the priests may have believed, it seems certain that, among pagan nations generally, the people acted in such a manner in their worship of idols, as to lead us to believe they, as well as the Egyptians in their animal paganism, did believe the apparently insensible statue, or idol, to be inhabited by the god which it represented. Otherwise it would have been the purest madness and fatuity to have offered sacrifices or presented offerings to them.

9. If not on the finger, where shall we wear the image of God? On the heart; on the soul; there let it be deeply engraven; there let the real image of his presence be as visible as the imaginary one on the ring. We need no material image to perpetuate his praise, or to hold him in remembrance. We may forget him, but he will not forget us. Like the Hindoo deity, he cannot slumber and neglect the world and the creatures he has made. He is everywhere; ever present to all his creatures; ready to bless; willing to pour out his goodness on all. We have only to look into ourselves to discover evidence of his being and his wisdom: "*we are fearfully and wonderfully made.*" With his finger he has traced the knowledge of himself upon our souls; and it is from within more than from without that we have certain manifestations of his existence. The whole world, indeed, proclaims, "*He is;*" the marks of his presence in nature are clear and undoubted; he is as much present to every thing existing as if he were

really the soul of the world ; but it is the soul of man alone that can, of all his creatures here, be sensible of his existence ; and man alone has, therefore, the high privilege of proclaiming his praise. It is the reason of man which perceives that he must be every where at every moment of time ; it is the reason that indignantly rejects the idea of an infinite Spirit being confined in space, or limited by our circumscribed idea of the infinite ; it is reason which repudiates the practice of, after any manner, forming an image which implies a belief in bounds or limits.

10. In the worship of such a Being, forms, and ceremonies, and rites, may be in some measure required to act on the senses, and stimulate the languid devotion of the soul ; but who dare say they are necessary or laudable ? “ Religious ceremonies,” says Sir Thomas Browne, excellently, in his *Religio Medicis*, “ are allurements and baits of superstition to those vulgar heads that look askint on the face of truth, and those unstable judgments that cannot consist in the narrow point and centre of virtue, without a reel or stagger to the circumference.” He who has the justest notion of God will use the fewest forms ; he who has the sublimest idea of his spiritual nature will require the fewest ceremonies to exalt his soul to prayer, or imbue it with fervency in devotion. The truest prayer is communion with God ; contemplation on Him ; a consciousness of his presence ; in which forms and ceremonies only distract and interrupt. In approaching God we are, indeed, commanded to come through Jesus Christ, and, therefore, *three* seem to be concerned ; but we are nowhere required to come to Him through a *fourth*, consisting of lifeless forms and useless rites, partaking rather of Judaism than Christian grace. In not despising the sighing of

a contrite heart, He hears the prayers and is alive to the aspirations of our souls, even though we have not used the form of language to express them.

11. The history of the world proves that ceremonies and superstition go hand in hand. The page of history likewise shews, that the deepest reverence and scrupulous zeal in behalf of religious rites are not always coexistent with true religion. And this is not difficult of understanding, when we consider that of all weaknesses of the mind, that of mistaking shadows for realities, is the most common. The vulgar mind is so gross and material, that it has no apprehension of things presented to it, unless they are to be felt or seen; as the taste of some has more pleasure in the coarsest than in the most delicate viands. With them ceremonies become another kind of idolatry. At length they cannot abstract religion from the rite, and religion soon after will be regarded as mere ceremony. The practice of the vain and self-righteous Pharisees, with whom to pray towards the east, in a certain posture at the corner of the street, courting the admiration of the crowd, or, with certain grimaces and contortions of the body, or in well-chosen habiliments, which was considered synonymous with religion, is not unknown amongst us. Many still place great reliance on forms and ceremonies; and, instead of receding from this bane of all true piety, we seem even now fast rushing into the world of formality.

12. Remember the bending of the knee, the muttering of the lips, the utmost tokens of outward reverence, however often repeated, can never constitute prayer. Nor can any of all the ceremonies that have entered the human imagination and entangled the mind, though all blended together, make true religion.

13. How many sad and weary pages of history are occupied with disputes, and even with wars, about forms or ceremonies ! One might believe the very defences and bulwarks of Christianity were built up of forms, whereas of all religions it least requires them ; in truth, was it not this religion, now obscured by the doings of men, which broke down the battlements of the ceremonial law ? And was its high object in levelling it to the dust only to build such another, and a worse, in its stead ?

14. The Christian religion is a religion essentially anti-formal, anti-material, because it is the religion of the heart, of the soul ; not lifeless, therefore, but ever-living, ever active, all spiritual. The mixed nature of man is spiritualized by it ; it brings the material-inclining soul from bondage of matter, and elevates it to the realms of spirits. All outward, formal influences, tending to draw down the soul, and sink it deeper in its materialism, are evils to be shunned as devices and craft of the devil.

Religion, pure and undefiled, is to the spiritualized being as breath to the body, as life to the soul. The object of religion is a pure spirit ; his worship, therefore, must be in spirit and in truth.



## THE DOCTRINE OF ABSTINENCE FROM ANIMAL FOOD MYSTICALLY CONSIDERED.

~~~~~

Symbol XXXVIII.—*Ab animalibus abstineto.*
Abstain from eating animals.

~~~~~

1. HERE an occasion arises in which we must address our remarks to the learned ; and, for a time, indulge in a theme opposed to the spirit of the age ; unattractive, therefore, to all who look for amusement, excitement, or popular discussion. The subject of this essay, we would willingly have passed over, as it is perhaps the most difficult of any we have yet to encounter ; but there are secret motives which weigh with us more than personal ease ; and we *dare* not yield to the promptings and earnest calls of self-indulgence. The labour, study, and meditation we have bestowed are great ; perhaps unappreciable by the casual reader, and unthought of by many of the learned ; but they are as nothing to us in consideration of the power of those secret motives alluded to.

2. The school of Pythagoras is not the only one that has inculcated and practised this command. Many have advocated a vegetable diet, in preference to an animal one ; but, as far as we can learn, never on any other grounds but the health of the body, or some such purely physical

reasons. The question, we conceive, has been set at rest, as regards the great body of mankind, for we cannot discover any who now practises this system. It was not even practised by those latter philosophers who have ranked themselves among the disciples of Pythagoras, Porphyry, Plotinus, and others; for that great modern Platonist, Taylor, though warmly in favour of vegetable food, found it impossible to abandon the "flesh-pots of Egypt." "I have found it expedient," he says, "to make use of a fleshy diet. Nothing, however, but an imperious necessity could have induced me to adopt animal, instead of vegetable, nutriment. Though I have been nurtured in eliotic and academic studies, yet it has not been in academic bowers." This may be explained by a passage in Porphyry, who says candidly, that abstinence from animal food cannot be practised by all men; not by those who enjoy an active life, but only by philosophers and others who lead a studious and contemplative life.

3. Sir Thomas Browne says, "there was no sarcophagy before the flood (from the stream of authority, and several deductions of Holy Scripture), and without eating of flesh, our fathers, from vegetable aliments, preserved themselves longer than their posterity by any other." True it is they lived to a good old age, but can vegetable food be properly attributed as the cause of that remarkable longevity? Would a pure vegetable diet make a man live eight or nine hundred years, which, we are told, was the age of some of the patriarchs? If any cause is to be given within the divination of the human mind; if a reason is to be conjectured to account for a fact beyond our power of explanation, we would say, that it is more probable changes have taken place in the constitution of man, or in

the physical properties of the atmosphere, than that any particular kind of food should have been the cause of so surprising and extraordinary a result. A change in the atmosphere, after the deluge, may have created a necessity for animal food ; at all events, it may be assumed, that it was by a natural law man was brought to conform to the alteration, and not by any whim or caprice of his own. It was, no doubt, the design and purpose of the Creator. We have no reason to imagine the organization of the human body, or the materials of its composition, are in any respect different from what they were before the flood ; and we may, therefore, reasonably suppose, what changes we have undergone since that period, causing a shortness of human life, have been brought about by the influence of external causes, to which our constitution has more or less accommodated itself. Any alteration in the atmospheric ingredients might operate in abbreviating the duration of life. We know, that at least one component part of the air is destructive to animal life ; and any change of its proportion (arising from unknown causes) might have the effect of making man's life shorter and less certain in its duration.

An idea similar to this may be found in Milton's divine poem, in which, after the fall of man, the angels are represented as bringing about several remarkable changes in the natural world : thus described by Addison, with his usual elegance of language,—“ infecting the stars and planets with malignant influences, weakening the light of the sun, bringing down the winter into the milder regions of nature, planting winds and storms in several quarters of the sky, storing the clouds with thunder, and, in short,

pervverting the whole frame of the universe to the condition of its criminal inhabitants."

" Some say he bid his angels turn ascance  
The poles of earth thrice ten degrees and more,  
From the sun's axle : they with labour push'd  
Oblique the centric globe."

4. The food of people is in a great measure determined by the climate in which they live. Those dwelling under a frigid sky, breathing the vapour of fogs and mists, and enjoying an active and industrious life, delight in animal food ; the indolent Asiatic, softened by a scorching sun, and dependent for his sustenance upon nature's spontaneous bounty, prefers what is more agreeable to his climate and mode of life. As the character and peculiarities of nations are formed from accidental circumstances, as climate, position, and food, we find those who live on animal food are more ingenious, more intelligent, more civilized, than others who live principally on roots and vegetables. There are also more practical virtues among such people, more genuine morality, more enterprise, in short, more of every thing that tends to make a nation great and good. Indolence and supineness, sloth and luxury, are great enemies to virtue ; it may be said they incline to self-indulgence, and, in the end, to vicious habits.

5. Did Pythagoras mean the command to be received in its literal sense ? Did he himself conform to his own rule of life ? Did he inculcate a practice impossible to be complied with ; a practice, the defence of which is manifestly founded on error ? In reply to these questions, we have no hesitation in saying, that he required the precept to be received literally ; that he practised it in his own

person; but as it was conceived only applicable to a philosophic and contemplative life, and limited to his own immediate followers, the absurdity does not apply, as if he demanded obedience by mankind in general.

6. Here, however, we are but glancing on the surface of the water; to know those profounder reasons, for so singular an injunction, we must dive deeper, and examine the doctrine of abstinence from animal food, in relation, not to moral virtue, but to philosophic truth. We shall find that the injunction (symbolizing an Egyptian practice) conceals a wild and strange dogma of ancient theology; as strange and wild as the transmigration of the spirit, or the pre-existence of the soul.

7. The great object of the philosophic life was to bring about the emancipation or deliverance of the soul; to deliver it from the slavery of corporeal desires, from the impurity caused by its temporary conjunction with matter, and from the perpetual inclination to descend to the realms of generation, into which, if it unhappily fell, it was incapable of ever being restored to that much-desired conjunction with its great parent—the Spirit of the world. This deliverance was effected by a life of contemplation, called the philosophic life; in which the soul abstained from every object that tended to retard its emancipation, and in which the body it is conjoined to should be free from gross impurities and desires.

8. It was believed, besides the gross material body, there was likewise in union with the soul a luminous, subtle, or ethereal body, inseparable from it in life or in death. Thus Plato, in alluding to this second body, says, in his *Phædrus*,—"An immortal animal has a soul, and likewise a body, which are both united, and, as it were, melted to-

gether from the beginning." The spirit and luminous body were, therefore, *in esse* before the Creator put them, or joined them, to the corporeal frame. In the ceremony of the purifications and deliverance of the soul, truth and virtue were required of the spirit, while abstinence from animal food, and other self-denying practices, were required for the purity of the luminous body; whose nature was liable to a material gross change by incorporation with the "flesh and blood," and animal desires.

This union of the divine soul (for the first nature was conceived to be an emanation of the supreme mundane soul) with the celestial body (vulgarly called the human soul), was compared by Plato to a winged chariot drawn by two horses, having a guide to direct them,—the understanding or spiritual nature. The chariot was the luminous body, governed by the soul; and the two horses represented the irascible and concupiscible desires, ever struggling to get loose, and impatient under control. In allusion to this metaphorical doctrine, Pythagoras says, in the *Golden verses* ascribed to him,—“Leave thyself to be guided and directed by the understanding, that comes from above, and which ought to hold the reins.” Or, in other words, curb the passions and desires, and let reason rule.

Of the composition of those vehicles of the soul (as they were sometimes called), we are thus informed by Jamblichus, who, in speaking of the subtle bodies of the demoniacal powers, says, they were neither taken from matter, nor from the elements, nor from any other body known to us; but the vehicles of human souls are conceived to be an extract or the quintessence of the celestial orbs. And Proclus, another Platonist, maintains it to be by its nature immaterial, indivisible, and impassable.

Pythagoras perceived the vital principle to be something different from the soul; and he conceived the purpose of animation or vitality to be the peculiar province of the ethereal body already mentioned. "This immaterial body," says his commentator Hierocles, "is the life, and produces the life, of the material body, by which life our mortal bodies become perfect, being composed of the immaterial life and of the material body, and being the image of the whole man, who, properly speaking, is a compound of the rational essence and of the immaterial body."

9. Now, after what manner is the soul to be purified? By truth, by virtue, by contemplation on divine things. And the luminous or immaterial body? As Hierocles says, by the sacred oracles, which, according to Porphyrius, inculcate initiatory rites, purifications, and other ceremonies; and finally, by subduing the mortal part of our nature,—the lusts, desires, and passions. In order to effect these great purposes and objects of a philosophic life, or preparation of the soul for final absorption in the great Universal Spirit, abstinence from animal food was conceived necessary.

The soul was believed to have existed, in the bosom of this great parent, before it was doomed to the imprisonment in a material frame; it issued from the stars on the wings of the ethereal body, whence it shall finally return by the same means. Those wings are folded up and powerless in this world of spiritual slavery and mortal woe; but as the soul prepares itself, on the eve of death, for its migratory flight to celestial regions, eternal mansions, where there is life without end, they are seen to expand and shoot forth. "That which most contributes to the growth of those wings," observes Hierocles, "is

meditation, by which we are taught to wean our affections from earthly things, and to shake off the pollutions it has contracted by its union with this terrestrial body."

If this luminous body has been clogged with the contagion of animal desires, and mortal pollution, its wings remain closed; it has no desire to leave the earth, but, like some insects endowed with wings for flight, it prefers grovelling in the mire, to the joy and ecstasy of the buoyant air and ethereal sky. In this unhappy state, it accompanies the polluted and sinful soul into the bodies destined for it, sometimes of animals, sometimes of plants; to undergo the ordeal of purgation, either to emancipate itself after a term of years, or sink down to irretrievable ruin, never again to mingle with the Eterual Spirit.

10. The doctrine of emanation was, in another way, intimately connected with abstinence from animals. Every thing having life was conceived to participate of the universal soul; and every animal (by the doctrine of transmigration), might possess, in durance vile, the soul of some wretched criminal, doomed to work out his freedom and ultimate felicity. Therefore, in destroying animals for the purposes of food, the pent-up soul was released, and the purpose of the avenging judge frustrated: thus man encroached upon the designs of providence, and made himself liable to punishment for his temerity.



THE GREAT ENIGMA RESOLVED.

~~~~~  
Symbol XXXIX.—A fabis abstineto.
Abstain from beans.
~~~~~

1. IN a writer, clearness and perspicuity are excellent attributes, always to be exhibited, if possible. Simplicity of diction is necessary in the attainment of these objects, as well as to beauty and elegance of composition. A perfect comprehension of his subject by the writer is the most certain way of placing it clearly before the reader. But there are some subjects which cannot be treated with that clearness and simplicity so desirable in others; and in which the writer cannot level himself to the ignorant and unlearned. The terms and allusions made use of are only to be understood and appreciated by those who have some previous knowledge of the subject under discussion. The utility and value of the author's mode of treating it can only be fully estimated by minds in some degree in accordance with his own. Thus, metaphysical and antiquarian pursuits indulged in by some, are derided and despised by others; while, on the other hand, the writer of fiction is equally despised and neglected by the metaphysician and antiquarian.

2. Let this preface suffice to prepare the reader for what is to follow. If we have hitherto concealed our learning under a cloud, in deference to the present superficial and unlearned tone of society ; if we have been urged by various motives to bring our essays down to the level of men's minds, rather than treat them with that length, diffuseness, patience, learning, and authoritative quotation distinguishing writers of a more learned era, we are now compelled, by the subject-matter of this essay, to deviate from our ordinary course, and plunge headlong into the depth of learning and erudite research. From this novel view of our character, many who have complacently borne with us so far will turn away with undissembled disgust, and close the book as peremptorily as if we had all at once changed the language of our writing. But there shall be, no doubt, a few left to qualify the desertion of others, and encourage us in our "labour of love." To these we turn with affection and sympathy.

3. "Profanum vulgus ! unlearned crowd ! approach not this our Temple of Deep Things, but with fear and trembling ! Expose not thy weak vision to the glory and effulgence conspicuous there all at once ; but as an humble neophyte, come near, and with a soul full of all humility, subject thyself to the required initiatory rites during five revolving years. Such is the time demanded before thou canst bear the light of knowledge and ancient wisdom ; of mysterious symbols ; of mystic types ; of the deep things of nature ; the wonderful doings of an unseen power in man, and in the world ; five revolving years of meditation must thou pass in abstinence from pleasure, in devotion, in solitude, in patient study, before thou canst receive one solitary ray of such light as shines upon the mind of learn-

ing. Thy vision now overclouded by ignorance, shall then become clear ; the scales shall fall from thine eyes ; and, like a blind man, yet imperfectly seeing the objects around, thy sight shall become conscious to the presence of light.

—— “ *Omnem, quæ nunc obducta tuenti  
Mortalis habet visus tibi, et humida circum  
Caligat, nubem eripiam.* ”

“ The cloud which, intercepting thy clear light,  
Hangs o'er thy eyes, and blunts thy mortal sight,  
I will remove.”

Thy sight perceiving at first only one ray or pencil of light, sufficient to make the darkness of thy soul visible to thyself, shall gradually expand and adapt itself to the increasing light thrown upon it, till in full maturity of years it shall comprehend and encompass every object fit for human contemplation.”

In inviting all to come into our Temple of Deep Things, we have prepared a repast suited to every taste and every palate. There shall be found food for babes, and stronger diet for full-grown men. In the grand variety no guest will go away unsatisfied : those who have yet received nothing, let them tarry a little.

4. Hippocrates, physician and demigod, and god among physicians, in his second *Book on Diet*, says beans are a restraining food, and were rejected by the Egyptians as impure and unwholesome. Diogenes Laertius, in his wretched life of the great Samian philosopher Pythagoras, affirms that he eschewed beans, and forbade them to his disciples, because they were conceived to have some mysterious spiritual attributes, and seemed, therefore, to partake of life—a most lucid and sensible explanation of the difficulty. As well might we seek for sunbeams in cucumbers, as

ALL I CAN SAY: ARISTOTLE, a far deeper man, appears to have seen further from the mark, when he gravely informs us that to abstain from beans is to avoid the gates of hell, a warning known to be the symbol of mercy or compassion, or it may have aided prayer. As far are they from the truth — or the faculty of (Edipus, *Enigma Solver*, — we imagine or affirm, that because white and black beans were used in Greece in balloting at elections, Pythagoras in the seventh warned us from embroiling ourselves in politics or state intrigues.

3. That there was some deep mystery connected with this sacrament, may be collected from several passages in ancient writers, among whom we may at present mention Pausanias, who, in his useful *Description of Greece*, says, "In this road there is a temple of no great magnitude, which is called the Temple of Cyamitas; but I cannot affirm with certainty whether this person first of all sowed beans, or whether the temple was denominated out of reverence to some hero, because it is not lawful for them to ascribe the invention or discovery of beans to Ceres. *But he that has been initiated in the Eleusinean mysteries, or has read the poems called Orphic, will know what I mean.*" What can more excite our curiosity than enigmatical hints like these! If this and other writers, as Herodotus, who perplex us by these obscure tokens of mystic rites, had chosen to have been more communicative, they would have saved much speculation in the minds of the learned, and saved many a lover of ancient lore days and nights of intense labour and study. For strange is it that man is careless and indifferent about the knowledge that is manifest, but eager and covetous about what is beyond his reach, or involved in difficulty and doubt. Such passages

as the one above afford food for speculation, and trials of learning and antiquarian skill. Beyond this they are no more useful than the question of Thomas Aquinas, who would know how many angels could poise themselves on the point of a needle without jostling each other, or whether angelic natures have not, or may not have, beards.

In a mystical book, entitled, *The Caves of the Nymphs*, written by a dreaming Platonist, or spurious Pythagorean, there is a curious and erudite passage, which may perchance have some weight with the reader, and compensate for our own blank deficiencies. It is herein said, "that bees do never sit on beans, which were considered by antiquity as a symbol of generation proceeding onwards in a direct line; because this leguminous vegetable is almost the only seed-bearing plant whose stalk is perforated throughout without any intervening knots." Upon which the learned Platonician Taylor makes this very *obvious* deduction; "hence, when Pythagoras exhorted his disciples to abstain from beans, he intended to signify, that they should beware of a continued and perpetual descent into the realms of generation." The admirable reasoning in both passages is evidently in perfect accordance with the rules laid down by Aristotle. Cicero, superficial in ancient philosophy as he was, seems to have had no idea of the mystical nature of beans, or their secret relation to ancient mysteries, when he observes that the Pythagoreans abstained from them, as if that kind of food inflated the mind rather than the belly—a solution apparently rational, and perhaps true, but yet very commonplace and vulgar; and therefore not at all calculated to please the laborious inquirer, who, in making so obvious a discovery, would really find nothing to occupy his leisure hours, to gratify

his zeal for classic lore, or compensate him for the labour of research. The most successful mode of establishing a fact in history, or any other subject, is first to entangle it in a web of words, surround it with difficulties, put out every glimmering of light to be found in other writers, and then proceed to spin out our own theory. In this way some amuse themselves, and finally establish a reputation for learning.

6. According to Herodotus in *Euterpe*, the Egyptians would not even look on beans. They were, it is said, prohibited from being grown in Egypt, and the inhabitants would rather have died than partaken of them. What mystery have we here ! Whence arises this extraordinary repugnance to a vegetable so harmless ? A repugnance sufficient to attract the notice of Pythagoras, who was persuaded by diverse sound reasons of the priesthood to fall into the same ridiculous superstition. Is there not some wonderful mystery in all this, to justify the labours of the philosopher ? If a hieroglyphic, or broken pediment of a pagan temple, or the illegible characters inscribed on the shell of a beetle, or the broken inscription graven on some ancient stone, be considered objects of laudable curiosity to the most grave and learned men ; surely an inquiry into this stranger mystery, involved in abstinence from beans, conveying, as it clearly does, some great piece of superstition in the Egyptians, or some profound moral or theologic precept in Pythagoras, is not unworthy of our time and talents.

7. That prince of antiquarians, the learned, patient, laborious Jacob Bryant, has attempted a solution of the great enigma ; but it partakes of the character of his whole *Ancient Mythology*, of bringing all things to sub-

serve and support the ground-work of his theory ; and must, therefore, be received rather as a curious and singular speculation of a fanciful philosopher, than as a true solution of the difficulty. " Most of the aquatics of the Nile," he observes, " were esteemed sacred, and among these the *Faba Egyptica*. It was a species of bean, called *colocasia*, and was revered on account of its shape. Nothing can more resemble a boat than the pod of a common bean ; and it is particularly like the *Navis Biprora*, or sacred ship of Isis. The *Faba Egyptica* had the like appearance, and this, perhaps, was the reason why Pythagoras abstained from beans ; for his whole system seems to have been borrowed from Egypt."

It is well known that the lotus was a sacred or emblematic plant among the Egyptians, which Bryant accounts for on the same grounds—as being a type of the ark at the deluge ; for it rises with the waters of the Nile, as the ark rose above the waters of the flood. Proclus argues, that it was esteemed sacred, because it unfolds its leaves before the rising of the sun, and gradually expands them as the luminary ascends towards the zenith, and again contracts them as he ascends towards the west. " Hence," he continues, " this plant, by the contraction and expansion of its leaves, appears no less to honour the sun, than men in the gesture of their eye-lids, and the motion of their lips." This appears as excellent an illustration of the emblematic character of the lotus, as the same writer's explication of the mystery is a probable one. For most of the religious rites of Egypt, and much of her idolatry and superstition, related to the adoration of the sun.

8. In the profundity of the question, we are led on from deep to deeper still ; as we pursue our course a wider field

We are told at that period all kind of pulse was strictly forbidden, from some scruple as regards cleanliness. At other times the same objection did not obtain; and we have seen that the biographer of Pythagoras distinctly says he partook of the pulse of beans. How, then, may be reconciled this deviation, even though occasional, with the command laid down—“*Abstain from beans,*” which is undoubtedly an injunction absolute and perpetual, the breach of which at any time would have been considered a violation of sanctity? In the first place, it may be remarked, that the command applies, not to beans generally, but to the fruit of the lotus, and, therefore, to eat the common pulse, was not any violation of the command; and in the second place, it is manifest that in this, as in other cases, Pythagoras adopted a custom to convey a religious or moral obligation. In the symbols already given, familiar objects are employed to convey and inculcate great moral truths.

It is only by assuming the bean to be a sacred object, and in some way used in religious rites and mysteries, that we can at all explain the many dark allusions thrown out by ancient writers with regard to beans. The Egyptians probably understood the reason of all the mystery; they may have known the origin of it; but it is clear the Greeks, who had adopted the sacred emblem, and perhaps also made use of it in their mysteries, were perplexed how to explain the purport, and knew nothing of its origin. Pythagoras was well acquainted with the mythology of Egypt, having lived there for several years, having intimately associated with the priests, and, above all, having been initiated into the mystic rites and secret doctrines of their singular religion. The exact use, therefore, of the Cya-



mus in their religious ceremonies or worship, the reason of the sacred character given to it, its typical or emblematic form, could not be secrets to a man of his sagacity and enquiring spirit.

In conclusion, we may safely affirm, that, by abstinence from beans, Pythagoras signified a general reverence for sacred things : things employed for religious purposes ; sanctified by their office, and in a manner consecrated to the gods. The obscurity and mystery we have thus, as we hope, successfully overcome, can be no matter of surprise, when we know perfectly the whole system of Pythagoras : he did not intend that all the world should know the doctrines of his philosophy ; it was only to the initiated that those mysteries that manifestly perplexed all Greece were cleared up, that the whole fountain of knowledge was opened, discrepancies reconciled, and types explained.

## ON MUSIC.



**Symbol XII.**—Carminibus utendum ad Lyræ.  
*Let the lyre accompany your songs.*



1. IT is said in Telemachus, that he who possesses knowledge, and communicates it not, is like a good sword that is never drawn ; which judicious remark we have had as a beacon through all the maze and variety of these essays. It has been observed also, that the most excellent music, if it be hidden, is worth nothing ; which music may apply to the periods of composition and numbers, as well as to sounds ; for it is evident, that the faculty of good writing and genius of poetical inspiration are of no value when concealed from the world :—a law of nature that may be considered the cause of our undertaking this *magnum opus et arduum* ; for if we can write to the benefit and improvement of others not so well gifted, why should we put our light under a bushel, and leave benighted man in darkness, or at least in twilight ?

We have not only a light within ourself, but we may be the cause of light in others. To this inward radiance we may apply these lines of Milton, in which he points out the advantages of innocence and a clear conscience.

“ He that has light within his own clear breast,  
May sit in the centre and enjoy bright day ;  
But he that hides a dark soul and foul thoughts,  
Benighted walks under the mid-day sun,  
Himself his own dungeon.”

2. Music was highly esteemed by the Pythagoreans. As we believe it refines the taste, and, when well employed, elevates the mind, so they imagined it to be an important agent in subduing the passions, and exciting the mind to contemplation ; in consequence of which, music was used copiously in the initiatory rites and exercises of the school. It was regarded as something far higher than a mere instrument of pleasure to delight the ear with melodious sounds.

Some have thought our great philosopher to have been the discoverer or inventor of the musical chords, which he found out by the accidental sounds emitted from the strokes of hammers of different weights on a piece of iron. But this has been disputed by men of very great authority ; and rather than excite the controversy afresh, we shall carefully abstain from making any exhibition of our learning on this *questio vexata*.

We cannot doubt, however, that he constructed a musical scale and stringed instruments of various kinds ; as we are assured the former was engraved in brass, which was carefully preserved as a curiosity in the temple of Juno, at Samos, said to have been his native place. He was, as far as we can learn from profound inquiry, the first of mankind who ever heard that sweet and ravishing music—the music of the spheres. In truth, his partial followers have been bold enough to aver, that he is the only mortal who was ever so highly favoured by the gods as to hear these celestial sounds. But, instead of following the popu-

lar belief in ascribing that music to Jupiter's banqueting hall, where all the gods were assembled to feast on food of heavenly kind, and partake of the well-known nectar of Olympus, he acted the true casuist and philosopher, and tried to discover a natural reason for these celestial sounds. He ascribed them to the whirling planets causing a vibration in the ether, through which they pass in their revolutions; and that though each planet emitted a different note, depending on its relative size, the whole together constituted such perfect harmony as is not known on earth. This explanation of so pleasing a phenomenon may not satisfy the fastidious taste of modern devotees, but as far as we are concerned, we shall abide by it till a better is offered.

3. Music, by Pythagoras, was esteemed an infallible remedy for many diseases of both mind and body. In his school it was the practice to regale themselves before retiring to rest; the soft influence of music was found to lull the mind to repose and tranquillity, so as to make sleep inviting, and inspire agreeable dreams. The duties of the day, also, were preceded by music. They generally sung verses, accompanying the voice with the lyre, which verses were, perhaps, religious hymns, or invocations to the Deity. "There is nothing more prejudicial to the soul," said Pythagoras to his disciples on one occasion, "than to go early in the morning into company, and plunge ourselves into the hurry of affairs, before we have, by the help of music, meditation, and prayer, calmed and composed our minds." We are not quite sure whether they had likewise music during their repasts; but it is probable, as at such times it was much used by the ancients. Epictetus says, like an enthusiast, that a table

without music is little better than a manger ; for music at meals is like a carbuncle set in gold, or the signet of an emerald highly burnished. Whenever Clenius was inclined to anger, spleen, or such like infirmities, incidental to mortal man, he had recourse to his lute, which never failed to restore tranquillity. Pythagoras checked a young man, who was bent upon some bacchanalian freak, by ordering the musicians to change from the Phrygian airs that had inflamed his passions, to the slow, solemn, Doric measure. Music was by some deemed to be an excellent cure for the gout, and the best antidote to spleen and melancholy. It appears to be a more proper *recipé* for the quartane ague than the one proposed by Sir Thomas Browne, out of Sammonicus, namely, "to lay the fourth book of Homer's Iliad under one's head;" and surely a better remedy for the sting of a scorpion than the one said to be delivered by Pierius in his hieroglyphics, "to sit upon an ass with one's face towards the tail, for so the pain leaveth the man and passeth into the beast."

This *power* of music was implicitly believed by the ancients, as we may gather from many passages in their poets and dramatic writers. In Homer, Ajax says, while resolving on suicide,

———"The wound that must be cut  
No wise physician will attempt to heal  
With incantations, elegy, or song."

The power of music in the battle-field is well known. According to the historian Thucydides, the Spartan troops were taught to march towards their enemies by the sound of flutes or pipes.

To deprive oneself of music, in ancient times, was an act of punishment, or self-denial, that betokened despair

of mind; a deprivation shewing the deepest sense of a domestic affliction, or any great misfortune. Thus Admetus, before the death of his wife (according to Euripides in *Alcestis*), resolves to mourn for her always, and to abandon all pleasures which excite to mirth and cheerfulness; among other things, he determines to abandon the charms of music.

———" Thence I renounce  
The feast, the cheerful guest, the flowery wreath,  
And song that used to echo through my house;  
For never will I touch the lyre again;  
Nor to the Libyan flute sweet measures raise  
My voice."

4. To accompany the lyre with the voice was very common, if not universal. By Pythagoras mere musical sounds were condemned as sensual enjoyment; a pleasure of the ear, without any good effect to the mind. "This philosopher," observes his commentator, "rejected flutes and the other instruments of music, as being prejudicial to manners, and retained only the harp, because, in playing on the harp, we may sing the benefits of the gods, and the virtues of great men." It was on moral grounds, therefore, that Pythagoras esteemed and cultivated music. He thought no harmony could be evolved unless the voice accompanied the lyre, which some affirm was taught to him by Homer, who never represents Achilles playing on the lyre without singing at the same time. As music was intended by him to reform manners, improve the taste for harmony, and elevate the soul, this could not be so effectually done by mere isolated sounds, however exquisite and beautiful in themselves, as by accompanying the instruments with words, that conveyed the ideas intended to give examples, and stimulate to virtue and great deeds.

The reason, says Aristotle, why Minerva condemned the flute, was not because it deformed the visage, but because it failed to inform the mind and improve the manners. Besides, the lyre was the favourite instrument of Apollo, and may be supposed to emit music originally from heaven; and was perhaps, on this account, esteemed the most appropriate vehicle to convey hymns and invocations to God. No one, with any taste, can deny that the human voice alone is a very imperfect thing in religious exercises. But when accompanied by a fine instrument, as the organ, the effect is beautiful and soul-subduing,—the state in which we ought to be in approaching the throne of God. In our songs, also, whether intended for cheerfulness, or by way of stimulating us to great deeds, or elevating the mind by magnificent ideas, an instrument is indispensable.

5. The Pythagorean idea of music was a very remarkable one. There was a power ascribed to it of wonderful efficacy. It was conceived to be of divine origin; an idea that may explain the mysticism used in discussing the subject. What grandeur and sublimity in the idea of the planets emitting melodious sounds, as they proceed on their everlasting course! The imagination has sometimes deceived men into the belief of hearing divine music in the air,—music given forth by instruments touched by celestial fingers. This idea is magnificently expressed in some verses in Milton's *Hymn on the Nativity*.

“ When such music sweet,  
Their breasts and ears did greet,  
As never was by mortal finger strook;  
Divinely-warbled voice,  
Answering the stringed noise,  
As all their souls in blissful rapture took;  
The air such pleasure loth to lose,  
With thousand echoes still prolongs each heavenly close.”

And again,—

“ Such music as ’tis said,  
Before was never made ;  
But when of old the sons of morning sung,  
While the Creator great  
His constellations set,  
And the well-balanced world on hinges hung ;  
And cast the dark foundations deep,  
And bid the weltering waves their oozy channels keep.”



# ON PYTHAGOREAN NUMBERS, AND PLATONIC IDEAS.

~~~~~  
Symbol XII.—Unum: Duo.

One: Two.
 ~~~~~

1. THE patient and benignant reader, whom we have aimed to conciliate by briefness, and to please by variety, will, after a perusal of our work so far, allow us some merit for courage and enterprise in conquering the difficulties that have lain in our path, and in surmounting obstacles that at first sight seemed almost insurmountable. If we have passed the fiery ordeal in safety—if we have hitherto encountered the perils of the way with success—if we have brought order out of chaos; displayed the pearl of truth among many counterfeits; and have done all that could be done, and much more than could have reasonably been expected, in compiling a veritable system of Pythagorean philosophy, in all its branches, of morals, religion, science, physical and physiological—illustrated or tinged here and there by the diviner hues of Christian truth, yet we find our labours not yet finished, our journey not yet ended. There is a mountain to ascend, dangerous and precipitous, ere we can see the land of promise. This mountain which retards our joyful career, is to be

found in the symbol ONE : TWO. As our eye beholds its summit piercing the sky of heaven, the heart quakes with fear, the soul sinks within us.

2. There is a mystery in numbers : a power in numbers : why a mystery—why a power, is as great a mystery. Ancient nations believed in the power ; modern nations have believed sometimes, and acted as if they believed, though they will deny it. Among the vulgar it is, and always has been, a superstition. Among the learned, it has been acknowledged as a cause. The number *thirteen* is considered unlucky among the vulgar : whilst among the learned, the *ninth* year is believed to be portentous of great events ; the *seventh* year in man's life, the *fourteenth*, the *twenty-first*, and the *forty-ninth*  $7 \times 7$ , attended with danger, or, according to some, with certain changes in the constitution. The Jews placed great reliance on the power of numbers, receiving an apparent sanction from an accidental or intentional recurrence of particular numbers in the Mosaic law. The number 7 was great among that people.

3. Plutarch, in referring to the secret power of numbers, somewhere remarks the wonderful sympathy between the pupil of the cat's eye, and the increase and waning of the moon ; and a mysterious relation between the number of young a cat bears, and the number of the lunar days ; facts which, we confess, have eluded our observation—though we are usually awake to any such curious coincidences in nature.

For the same reason, *Ælian* informs us, that the Egyptians worshipped dogs because their puppies are blind THIRTEEN days, and the moon is dark THIRTEEN days in the year ; and it appears on the same analogy, wonderful

as it may appear to modern ignorance, arose the worship of the crocodile ; namely, because,

|                  |          |
|------------------|----------|
| It lives, . . .  | 60 years |
| Goes pregnant, . | 60 ...   |
| Lays of eggs, .  | 60       |
| Has of teeth, .  | 60       |
| Of vertebræ, .   | 60.      |

The god Apis lived, it is well known, twenty-five years, which was a cycle in the Egyptian chronology, at the end of which period, divinity left the bull, and he drowned himself in the waters of the Nile.

Passing over pagans, and the superstition we may imagine to have originated in their peculiar system, we lay our hands on Irenæus, a Christian of pious memory, who, to refute those very pagans, proved to demonstration the truth of the four gospels by the same mystical power of numbers. " There are," says he, "*four* quarters of the globe ; *four* cardinal winds ; consequently there are *four* gospels in the church, as there are *four* pillars that support it, and *four* breaths of life which render it immortal."

A mathematician who had greater respect for *figures* than for numbers, and more veneration for both than for God, argued, that " were the Supreme Being to shew himself visibly, he would choose the circle rather than the triangle, the square, the pentagon, the duodecagon, or any other figure." The circle, because, no doubt, he imagined it to be the most beautiful and most perfect of all figures ; if the most perfect, why is it not to be found in nature ?

Again, we have the *three* graces, the *three* fates, and the *three* furies. The muses were *three* multiplied into

itself; the bolt of Jupiter was *triped*; the sceptre of Neptune a *tridant*; and Cerberus, the fabled dog of hell, had *three* heads. "The dangerous periods of the lives and fortunes of men, which the Chaldeans called climacterics, are momentous, and happen every *seven* years," observes Aulus Gellius.

4. The art and mystery of numbers among the Pythagoreans is a subject extremely difficult to understand. The various contradictions of the most learned men on this point prove the inscrutable veil which conceals it. Some conceive a mystical power was attributed to them; others, who are inclined to have a higher opinion of Pythagoras, more reasonably think he only used numbers as diagrams are used in the mathematics, to simplify and define more obviously his peculiar doctrines to the uninitiated. The mystery he chose to involve them in was a stroke of his usual artifice to excite wonder and curiosity among his pupils; the better to obtain a hold over their minds. In ancient times every system had this device applied to it; the esoteric and exoteric doctrines were common to each system; the one for the pupil, the other for the initiated. In this way the priesthood taught a vulgar religion to the ignorant, multiplied their gods without number, and gave them histories not creditable to man, much less to beings of divine origin; whilst to the initiated they unfolded mysteries (not perfectly explained) illustrative of the unity of God, and the falsehood of the whole mythological system. Legislators, to procure sanction to their laws, found it politic to attribute them to divine origin, in the same way as Pythagoras used the fables of Egypt, and the mystery of the religion of Égypt, to give

an authority to his teaching which his simple *ipse dixit* would perhaps have failed in doing. For a prophet is not respected in the country of his birth.

5. In Plato's hands, obscurity was added to mystery : aspiring to be the founder of a new system, made up of fragments of those then prevalent in Greece, and, therefore, on a more extensive scale, and with a genuine eclectic spirit (the eclecticism of Plato has not been sufficiently observed by his commentators), he changed the numbers of Pythagoras into ideas—intelligible or abstract ideas,—and reared on them that abstruse edifice which has equally astounded and puzzled all future generations. These ideas he conceived to exist primarily in the Divine Mind, where they were as patterns, or ideal forms of things, subsequently brought into being in much the same way as abstract ideas, *e. g.* of beauty, or of the good, are in the minds of men, afterwards to be employed in the description of a perfect character, or by an artist in the representation of a beautiful object. Thus, a mathematical figure can only exist in its perfect form in the mind ; and it is upon such ideal form that the reasoning proceeds, and not upon the tangible or visible representation. Those ideas in the Divine Mind were conceived, by Plato, to be the paradigms, or perfect patterns, of things in nature, which, being copied, partook of that imperfection and irregularity incidental to all things material. Before the universe was plastically disposed (for no absolute creation, of something out of nothing, was admitted in any ancient system) out of matter eternally existing, the Deity had, according to Plato, an intelligible or ideal world in his own mind, which was copied into the visible or existing world—a beautiful and sublime idea, and so far true as

regards creation absolutely conceived, and conformable to the *good* which God himself pronounced on all his works ; for it cannot for a moment be thought that He made the world without any preconceived design, or pre-ordination of the world before it came into existence.

There is a great deal, too, in Plato of apparent play on words numerical ; but as the system they belonged to was not his own, but borrowed chiefly from Timæus, we shall proceed to Pythagoras, and explain the same mystery in his system.

6. Pursuing this doctrine of intelligible ideas, we find Pythagoras treating them as scientific and intelligible numbers. The scientific are the arithmetical power evolved from one or unity, or the progression of multitude from the *monad*, and the absorption again of the multitude in the monad ; the intelligible numbers are those subsisting eternally in the Divine Mind, and which remain immutably the same.

As his disciples inform us, he conceived these numbers to be the archetypes by which all things were made ; in exactly the same way as Plato thought of his intelligible ideas. We find them also called the cause of essence to being, which means nothing more than the transcript of an ideal number on a thing material, or, more properly, on any thing material or immaterial, external to the Divine Mind. The impression of a seal on wax we may call the transcript, the seal itself the archetype or ideal number. For any thing to have essence is to possess that which is essential to its being as a particular thing, as we may say extension is the essence of matter ; for without extension it would be no matter. The essence of the soul is that substratum or spirit in which certain powers or facul-

ties exist ; for the faculties of the mind are no more the mind itself, than qualities can be considered matter itself. The essence of Pythagoras was something different from this metaphysical essence or substratum ; it was, indeed, the image of the idea existing in the mind of God. It was not essentially in matter, for matter was eternal in his notion of things ; and before the plastic creation they were only in the Divine Mind, having not yet emanated from him.

7. We must, therefore, clearly distinguish between essence and substance ; the substance is that to which essence is given. The essence given may be taken away, as there was manifestly a time when it was not given ; when matter existed, but existed as matter purely, without form, or order, or beauty.

It may be said, that of the substance of spirit, or of matter (by which we simply mean the metaphysical thing in which certain faculties, or certain qualities, exist, whose action in the one, and outward appearance in the other, we are pleased to call spirit and matter, soul and body), we can possibly have no conception, because all our knowledge is about their effects alone. Nevertheless, by an abstraction of the mind, we have a clear perception that there must be something existing, as essence, or cause of these faculties of soul, and qualities of matter. Of matter, there are primary and secondary qualities ; qualities separable and inseparable ; qualities essential or necessary ; and qualities merely accidental or contingent. Colour is of the one ; extension of the other. To imagine matter without extension is an impossibility ; it is necessary, therefore, to our idea of existence ; but yet we cannot think that extension (and consequently figure) is matter,

though it constitutes matter to us. There is something of which extension is a property; there is something of which thinking is a property; take away those properties from each (we mean by abstraction), and what remains? Nothing! Why so? Let the materialist explain.

8. Number being the essence of *being*, and all numbers flowing from the monad or unity, it is clear the essence of essences must be God himself. God existed only and alone from all eternity; and he is, therefore, the primary, essential, intelligible, self-existing monad. But when he came forth, as it were, from his abiding place, and began, in time, to exercise his creative or plastic energies, he was no longer the monad, isolated and alone, but became the *one*, or first number, of which all other things participate. There is reason to believe, however, that this one, or creating cause, was not the chief Deity, but the soul of the world; participating of the First or eternal Monad; as the *one* or God of Nature, he is shadowed forth in the symbol ONE: TWO.

9. In the number *one* there is a perfection which can belong to no other number, because all others necessarily come from it; therefore it is the cause of all enumeration; and, being a unit, is indivisible, and therefore a symbol of God. Nature having imperfections and multiplicity, was called *Duo*, or *Two*, as flowing immediately from the *One*. The objects in nature, those transcripts of the intelligible ideas, are, again, in Plato's system, denominated the *Many*.

10. We have reason to believe that the whole mystery of the symbol may be thus made plain. *Unum*, *Duo*, were words symbolical of God and Nature; Pythagoras merely used them as symbols, so far as we can discover. That



he was not the first inventor of this peculiar mystic power attached to numbers, is very evident; it was long before him, and it is probable he borrowed the mystery from a more ancient source, and adopted it into his own system, as he did on other occasions, without intending to countenance the superstition attached to it.

It is true that the later Pythagoreans have a different version; but knowing their real, or pretended, ignorance of the ancient philosophy, we have every motive to distrust and disbelieve them. Proclus and others have discovered in those mystic numbers of Pythagoras something pregnant with mystery and importance; considering them to be not only causes in nature, but occult powers, used anciently in theurgy, or divine operations, by whose agency miraculous effects were produced. Our enquiries have led to a more rational result, more consistent with antiquity, and more honourable to our great philosopher.

ON SUBORDINATE POWERS IN THE UNIVERSE, &c.

~~~~~  
Symbol XXII.—*Cælestibus imparia sacrificato, inferis vero paria.*
To the celestial gods sacrifice an odd number ; to the infernal an even.
~~~~~

1. BY the Pythagoreans, *odd numbers* were considered the most perfect, because they are not capable of division, as even numbers. Hence *God* was called by them the *One*, or unity, as indivisible ; and as the first cause of all enumeration, he comprehends every thing in himself ; whereas *matter*, or nature, was called *Two*, as divisible and diversified.

2. So far as our researches have extended, we find that Pythagoras admitted (as some others did in the twilight of their heathenism), of three classes of divinities. 1. God the Supreme. 2. From whom emanated other beings of a subordinate nature, and who are engaged in the government of the world. 3. Demoniactal powers. Beneath these he placed the souls of men, regarded by him as the lowest of rational natures. But when purged from the impurities contracted in the body, and blessed by ineffable  
used them the Supreme, to which the perfect soul aspires,  
nature of peace and happiness, he conceived

union with  
as its et

they became so sublime and perfect as to merit the homage, the respect, if not the worship, of men on earth.

The degree of worship due to the second class or celestial divinities, was of a purer kind than to the lower powers, or infernal gods ; because they were of higher birth, or origin, emanating directly from God, and to whom were intrusted more important duties by virtue of their superior intelligence ; whereas the latter existed by virtue of the second only, participating of the divinity through them, and having a lower sphere of duties to perform.

3. Whether these were mere popular doctrines to propitiate the priesthood, or the best category that man could devise at that period, as explanatory of the universe and its existence, is difficult to say ; but this we may affirm, that Pythagoras did, with most ancient philosophers, believe in only one eternal God, who is the supreme over all ; and, therefore, the other subordinate deities may be regarded in the light of angelic powers (beings under God alluded to in Scripture), depending on God for their existence and power. Even among Christians, the idea of degrees of rank in the angelic host is not unknown ; and the only great difference between them and the ancient doctrine is in the idea of worship offered to such beings—an error into which a heathen might easily fall. In truth, among some Christians, there is actual worship offered to the creature, as to the Virgin Mary and the saints ; while others worship Jesus Christ, whom they deny to be divine, except in a kind of participation (to use a Platonic word) of divinity from God. It is well known, that in the Arian controversy, the Arians were driven, step by step, to exalt their Son of God, till they carried him to the utmost height conceivable in a created being, as if (O vain

ON WORSHIP TO INFERIOR DEITIES: THE EXCLUSION OF THE SUPREME FROM WORSHIP IN ANTIQUITY: THE TRUE ENUMERATION OF SUBORDINATE POWERS IN NATURE, &c.

---

**Symbol XLIII**—Honorato imprimis habitum, tribunal, et triobolum.  
*Honour the marks of dignity, the throne, and the ternary.*

---

1. THE proofs of the truth of the Christian religion are various : 1. The prophetic proof ; 2. The historical ; and, 3. The intrinsic proof, or proof derived from the divine perfection, sublimity, and harmony of all its parts. Some theologians, not satisfied with such ample demonstration, have marred the beauty and simplicity of those proofs, by descending to the low arena of bandying words and doctrines with pagan and heathen mythologists. Thus have they pretended to discover in the vague writings of Plato, and vaguer systems of other philosophers, the awful mystery of the Trinity ; as if such a discovery (if possible) could add to or support the stability of this essential doctrine. Even in this symbol, Lilius Giralduſ, and, may be, others, find a ſecret alluſion to the doctrine, which is ſuppoſed to be couched under the word “ ternary ;” and this appears in a meaſure countenanced by the eſtimation in which the ternary number was held in antiquity as a ſymbol of perfection.

2. We have already shewn that Pythagoras enjoined his disciples first to worship the immortal gods, then the dæmons or ministerial agents in the lower world, and, lastly, heroes, or the souls of men deified for their wisdom and their virtues. This system of ternary worship we find also in those ancient writings called the *Golden Verses* of the Pythagoreans. Thus—

“(1.) First honour the immortal gods, as they are established and ordained by the law ;” namely, the pagan deities ; not because they really exist and rule over the affairs of men, but because it is politic to acquiesce in the established religion of the country.

“(2.) In the next place, honour the terrestrial dæmons, in rendering the worship lawfully due to them.”

“(3.) And, in the third place, honour the heroes who are full of goodness and of light.” Beings found worthy of the friendship of the gods ; who have been translated to the society of those gods by reason of their wisdom and virtue on earth, thus holding out a perpetual example to mankind in all ages, and tempting them to virtue by the beatification of their souls after death.

3. It may be observed by an inquisitive mind, that there is a sad omission in those degrees of divine natures ; the more remarkable when we have the certitude of the existence of a still higher divinity acknowledged by Pythagoras, and by most of the ancient philosophers. The *Unum* of the previous symbol refers to this Being—the God of gods ; his existence as the eternal cause is not denied ; the emanation of those subordinate deities from him is often acknowledged as a fundamental truth ; but why is not worship enjoined to Him as to others ? why is his name studiously omitted from among those worthy of our

reverence? This is a question of great difficulty; but to it an answer must be given, whether right or wrong. If our opinion be opposed to the truth, we are ready to retract, upon sound reasons, and satisfactory proof. There is no opinion, no hypothesis, no theory, no dogma, in heaven or in earth, which we would not willingly sacrifice on the sacred altar of Truth.

All our enquiries have, for the present, ended in the conviction, that the ancients, whether mere pagans or polytheists, philosophers, or men of the world, offered no direct worship to the Supreme Being. They confessed the fact of his existence—whether derived from reason or from imagination—but they nowhere inculcated the duty of offering to Him that worship, and those sacrifices, offered to the subordinate and emanating gods. One apparent reason was, that he took no immediate part in the government of the world; that the interests of humanity were delegated to other natures, and to these natures, gratitude and worship were alone due. The worship offered to these lower divinities indirectly redounded to his glory and honour; but he was deemed too transcendental a being to be affected by the affairs of men; and, therefore, worship to Him was deemed superfluous or useless.

To the Egyptians, Pythagoras was much indebted, not only for the air of mystery he throws around himself, but for many of his ideas and doctrines; or, at all events, the principles of the Egyptians, afforded him hints on which to build his own system. Now, we find the same omission of the Supreme Cause in the worship and theology of that people. His name was never mentioned; they dare not mention him by any name; it is even said, they had no name to designate him by, because he was conceived so

ineffable, as to be beyond all human conception and human sympathy. He is alluded to under the mysterious expression of "darkness" thrice repeated. Damascius, the Platonic philosopher, imitating the Egyptians, calls him an unknown and impenetrable obscurity. In truth, He was the unknown God. Those we imagine to be the chief gods of the ancients vanish away into subordinate or imaginary deities, when we examine the true theology : there we find an eternal principle acknowledged ; a self-abiding spirit, under different appellations, which was, no doubt, the Supreme Being.

It is well known that the Jews attributed a peculiar sanctity to one name of God, composed of three letters, which, it is said, could not be pronounced by the lips of man without irreverence and presumption. It was not only a sacred, holy name, but it was supposed to be endowed with that supernatural efficacy attributed by some to peculiar numbers. In magic, and theurgy, and incantations, it was all-powerful.

4. There is a positive pleasure in proceeding from this mysticism (awful proof of human imbecility) to the more rational description of the excellent Hierocles, the commentator of the *Golden Verses*, who calls the Supreme Being, as we might call him, the God of gods ; the most high and most good God ; the Creator of the world—whose essential goodness was the only cause to be assigned for the creation. "God being all good," he says, in allusion to the symbol, "produced, *first*, the beings that most resemble him ; *secondly*, those of a middle likeness ; and, *thirdly*, those who, of all beings that resemble him, participate the least of his divine image." In the genuine philosophy, those were not creations, in the popular sense,

but emanations from God ; and the third degree not directly, but through the first and second. This chain is carried to a preposterous length in the works and reveries of the later Platonists, as any one may discover, by consulting the writings of Plotinus, Proclus, &c. &c.

5. In one of the *Golden Verses*, we find this remarkable expression,—“ I swear by him who has transmitted into our souls the sacred *Quaternion*—the source of nature, whose course is eternal.” *Quaternion* means the sacred *Four*; called in Greek the *Tetrad*. We have these, *Unum*, *Duo*, the *Ternary*, and the *Quaternion*. What is the sacred *Quaternion*? Some have imagined it to refer to the four elements ; but how can the four elements be properly called the source of nature? Some to the four faculties of the mind. What are they? Some to the four cardinal virtues ; others have supposed this mysterious word or number to allude to the perfection of nature, or soul of the world, as comprehending in it the other three ; others, again, aiming at a more sublime definition, have fancied to discover in it a secret allusion to the name of Jehovah among the Hebrews, which was, as they affirm, composed of four letters. The word was JOD, with three letters only, but probably it has, from a mark at its termination, the power of four.

Hierocles affords a more simple and rational explanation. “ The *Quaternion*,” says he, “ is nothing else but God himself (in a philosophical sense), who has created all things. But how comes God to be called the *Quaternion*? This thou mayst learn in the holy book, ascribed to Pythagoras, in which God is celebrated as the number of numbers.” The reason seems to be this,—The number *FOUR* contains all the power of the *DECAD*, and therefore every



other number, as ten, or the Decad, is the limit of simple enumeration. "Now," continues Hierocles, "the power of ten is four, because, before we come to a complete and perfect decad, we discover all the perfection of the ten in the four." Thus, 1, 2, 3, 4 = 10. The number four, also, it will be observed, comprehends in it the monad, decad, and triad, *i. e.*, *One* primary; *Two* from *One*, *Three* from 1 and 2; and *Four* from 1 . 2 . 3 — in progression of number, and theologically in emanation, or what Plato calls participation of being.

We conceive, then, the Quaternion to be the God of nature. *One* is the primary and eternal cause; *four* comprehends all external to the Creator. Metaphysically, the being under the numerical symbol *four*, may be called the source of nature, whose course is eternal; because, in the language of Scripture, he is said to be all in all, and through all; not only is he the alpha and omega, the first and the last, but all between the alpha and the omega; the source of the inferior gods, heroes, and such like; the origin of the mundane soul; of nature, or the universe; and all things material and spiritual.

Can we answer that question of Hierocles: But how comes God to be the Quaternion? For elsewhere he is clearly symbolized under the Monad, or the *One*. Shall this suffice?

1 God, or the Monad, as the self-existent.

2 Nature, or the Dyd.

3 God and nature; the soul of the world, the ternary, or triad.

4 God as the creative and energizing cause.

---

10 The Decad.

---

Again,—

- 1 God as the cause of being.
- 2 The immortal gods emanating.
- 3 The terrestrial gods, from the second.
- 4 The heroes or deified souls.

---

10 The Decad.

---

As all came from the One, so all shall return.

ON THE OMNIPRESENCE OF GOD.

~~~~~  
Symbol XXIV.—Circumactus adora.
Turn round when you worship.
~~~~~

1. IT is observed by Plutarch in his *Life of Numa Pompilius*, that many of his institutions resemble those of the Pythagoreans; for as these had their precepts, the sense of which was hid from the vulgar, so some of Numa's have a concealed meaning, as,—

*Not to offer to the gods the wine of an unpruned vine.*

*Nor sacrifice without meal.*

*To turn round when you worship.*

*To sit down when you worship.*

Those symbols are found in the list of the Pythagoreans; and, without disputing or affirming the title of Numa to them (though we might shew a great deal of research on the question), we must venerate them, as part of the true Pythagorean category, and treat them as of equivalent authority. We could no more reject them as spurious, or the offspring of any other school, than we dare reject any one of the Catholic books of the Bible. It is clear, that those wise men who rejected what are called the Apocryphal books of the Old Testament, did so more from internal evidence of their spuriousness, as records of divine au-

thority, than from any clear light derived from their history or authors. No one can attentively or critically read those books, without being speedily satisfied of the sound judgment exercised in rejecting them as wholly uninspired. There are many parts of them true, historically and doctrinally true, as written by persons conversant intimately with the events related; but it may be seen how totally they fail in style; in that simple earnestness, and internal evidence of truth, distinguishing the Catholic books.

Till some heads equally wise prove to us the spuriousness of those four precepts, and with as much satisfaction shew, that internal evidence requires us to rend them from the great category, we shall as implicitly believe them to be truly Pythagorean, as we believe the books of the Old Testament to be of divine authority. It were doing violence to the perfection of the series to make a breach in the list: we should thereby incur a degree of responsibility that could not be tolerated with equanimity; we should introduce a schism into the system, that might require generations to close or heal up.

2. Plutarch is seldom a safe guide in the explanation of those symbols, which he here and there casually notices. Not that he is devoid of talent to grapple with so great a task. It is because they do not interest him deeply, and, therefore, he gives himself but little trouble to inquire. He was a moralist himself—and wrote on morals with a prodigious copiousness of words. But it was this garrulity, in which the essence or pith is dissipated into thin air, that made him incompetent to see the force of a precept, or to extract a great moral lesson from a few homely words, externally meaning a different thing. He could sometimes see, as in a glass darkly, the genuine import of

a symbol ; to some extent he could analyze, and exemplify it, and amplify it too ; but he had not the mind to see, or to admire, that peculiar process of condensation which could compress the experience of a whole life into a few proverbs or precepts, or symbolical sayings. How could he reach the true essence of the symbols ? He could neither go deep enough, nor soar high enough. He had not that speculation of mind which can find more than meets the eye.

As an instance of this incapacity, let us see what he says on the symbol we are now upon. " Turning round is said to represent the circular motion of the world. But I rather think, that as the temples opened towards the east, such as entered them necessarily turning their backs on the rising sun, made a half turn to that quarter, in honour of the god of day, and then completed the circle, as well as their devotions, with their faces towards the god of the temple." As a fact it may be true ; and the practice (if it did exist as stated) may have given origin to the symbol ; but that it is an explanation of the precept the symbol is meant to convey, we may easily deny. The mind of Plutarch had no depth of speculation, as we have already noticed, and he could not grasp the philosophy of religion which is wrapped up in the symbol. A mere superstitious, or pagan form of worship, as turning to the sun, god of day ; or the Jew to the temple of Jerusalem ; or the Christian to the altar in the east ; or the Mahometan to Mecca, is but a poor silly illustration. If this were all the symbol was meant to signify, we should throw down the pen, and leave it to float down the stream of time, as it has floated in times past. If nothing better were to be extracted from the symbol than this, we should have

doubted its origin, and placed it among those other apocryphal sayings of Pythagoras, preserved with so much affection by the later Platonists.

3. To turn round *practically* in adoring God, may be a vain, superstitious ceremony, and which, therefore, we would not enjoin upon any Christian. But whether really it be more vain or superstitious, than in raising our eyes or hands to heaven, as we do, as if the being addressed dwelt over our heads, we leave to the solution of the casuist. By raising our eyes heavenward, as it is called, we only second the practice of the Jew and the Mahometan, but in a more foolish manner, inasmuch as they had reasons, whether right or wrong, for looking or turning in a particular direction ; but the Christian declares that God, being everywhere, can exist nowhere ; being a spirit, he cannot dwell in space.

Now, the philosophy of this doctrine of God's omnipresence is embodied in the symbol. In turning round while adoring, we impress our minds with the belief that God is everywhere—his immensity fills the universe. We are not required actually to practice the revolution (for such a form would savour of absurdity), but reason and religion impel us to believe the result, namely, the omnipresence of God. If we discover the agency of the Creator to be more active in one part than another of the world, as in a storm or earthquake, we are not to fall into the vulgar belief of thinking that he has removed to that particular part of the world, and left that other part in which he was supposed previously to have been. It is clear that any idea of locomotion in God involves an absurdity, and a manifest contradiction, so long as we believe him to be what he is. The mind of man is, however, from infancy

warped with so many strange ideas of God, that it demands a great abstraction of the intellect to throw them off. Our very language every moment deceives and betrays our better judgment. Nay, we want the language to express the true philosophy. If we *can* abstract our minds for an hour, we cannot convey that abstraction in words; for at every step we stumble upon materiality, when spirituality is our theme.

If men still talk of the rising and setting sun, knowing that the sun rises not nor sets, it is not surprising that the language, popular and familiar, of infancy, should adhere to us in old age, and confound all our highest speculations. If men had formed a language to express, as well as could be done, the ideas of spiritual or immaterial things, we might not, perchance, have been guilty of those glaring absurdities and contradictions into which we fall. Though God be acknowledged to be a spirit, yet men, in their language, express him to be no spirit. They give him only the attributes of material things. They clothe him with a shape, and speak of him as a person having parts; they say he is omnipresent, but, in the same sentence, we hear of him descending and ascending; being here and there, up and down, in heaven and on earth; now present in one part of the universe, and now in another.

4. Another idea of the Pythagoreans may be evolved from the symbol; an idea not peculiar to them, but common to many systems of ancient theology. It is, that God, or a god (for it is doubtful whether he was believed to be the highest god—the principal of all things), dwells in and animates the universe, as the soul of man animates the body. From this doctrine (the very essence of polytheism, of mythology, of superstition of all kinds), the no-

tion arose, naturally, that the phenomena in the external world are the visible effects of a spiritual, intelligent, operating nature, or being, that inhabits or pervades the universe. And to make that devotional revolution of the body in worship, was to bear witness to the fact, that God is *personally* present in every part of the world. The world, therefore, was esteemed the great temple in which he was to be adored. From this doctrine (shewing the weakness of the human intellect when left to its own resolves in things divine; and the feebleness of the imagination, when it dares to overstep the boundary that divides the material from the spiritual world) originated the multifarious and diversified mythology, which represented every part of nature to be peopled with gods and demigods; and rendered sacred those places where the great Spirit of the world was supposed more obviously to display his presence and immediate power. Our scanty knowledge of Pythagoras does not enable us to decide the exact extent to which he carried this doctrine, of the spirit dwelling in and animating the world. Whether he really believed the doctrine at all is not certified; whether he carried it out, in his own mind, into all those results and consequences that seem to have flowed from it in other minds, may be reasonably disputed, from our knowledge of his character.

5. Though we cannot admit this fanciful solution of a divine problem, or subscribe to what is at enmity with our sublimer and worthier notions of God, because we cannot explain the veiled mystery of his being, we are as ready to proclaim his omnipresence.

How can the Infinite be circumscribed by the Finite? How can his spirit dwell in that which has immensity, but without infinitude? Our spirits are chained, like



Prometheus, to the material; they are destined here on earth to be bound to earth, and matter, and form; though at times they try to break the chain, and claim their primæval freedom, aspiring to an elevation and dignity perpetually mocked by the connection between body and soul: but with God, the Spirit, the Infinite, it is not so. To imagine him to be the soul of the universe, is to degrade him to our own state of servitude; to contrast him with our nature, is to give evidence of our utter incapacity to soar into the region of spirit and of spiritual things.

Those phenomena and manifestations of power, wisdom, and order, in the external world, are the undoubted effects of an immaterial cause; but in what way produced, is a mystery,—a mystery which the Pythagorean solution fails to explain. The mode in which the soul acts on the body we have no idea of; and we need hardly say, that without this knowledge, we must be profoundly ignorant of the way in which the Almighty works out his great decrees. How a spirit can exist at all without a bodily vehicle, is what we cannot so much as conceive. How it exists in a body, or in relation to a body, more properly, is a conception to us comparatively inferior; but it is not less incomprehensible.

The presence of God is to be recognised in the world; let us confess he is, and must be there. We can discover him everywhere; because, though he is not apparent to our senses, his power and wisdom are; and this we know and believe, in spite of all hypotheses or theories. These wild and weak elaborations of human intellect we must tear into shreds, and scatter to the winds, as more worthless than the dust driven before the blast.

Let us, by constant and sober reflection, elevate our

thoughts of him, the better to avoid those popular, and therefore degrading, ideas that prevail among men. If we *believe* him (as we all say we do) to be a pure spirit, a being without parts or passions, let us not *think* of him as if he were not; if he really does not inhabit space, in our meditations, let us avoid the inconsistency of attributing to him our own finitude. If we cannot think of him as he is, let us not think of him contrary to our belief of his nature.

ON THE REVERENCE FOR SOUNDS AND PLACES,  
AS A RELIGIOUS EMOTION.

~~~~~  
Symbol XLV.—*Flantibus ventis, echo adora.*

When the winds blow, adore the echo.
~~~~~

1. THE poetical mythology of Greece peopled the woods, groves, rivers, and such like, with divinities; and, of course, those places where these gods dwelt, or which they haunted, would be considered sacred. The *grove* superstition is one of the most ancient recorded. We find it frequently alluded to in Scripture. Probably it was a posterior branch of that idolatry which seems at one period to have covered the whole earth,—the adoration of the stars and planets. Echoes were esteemed sacred, as associated with temples, grottos, and solitary places; and originated in that deep-set feeling of the human mind, arising from solitude and loneliness. The same feeling springs in our breasts, the same hallowed influence is exercised, when alone, in shady groves and sequestered retreats (a pleasing melancholy spreading itself over the mind); but we confess the presence of God, under the religious emotion, instead of those mythological beings conjured up by the imagination in ancient times.

2. It is well known that the building of their temples,

and particularly their site, were determined by the proximity of silent groves, deep caverns, and strange sounds; taking great care, at the same time, to erect them within some ideal inclosure. Those mountains that were cavernous were highly revered, as residences of divinities. Thus, in Pausanias' *Description of Greece*, we find that a cavern in Phocis was sacred to Aphrodite; while, according to Strabo, the mountain of Parnassus was a place of great reverence, having many caverns, and other detached spots, highly honoured and sanctified. That prince of antiquarians, Bryant, also observes, that at Tænarus was a temple with a fearful aperture, through which it was fabled Hercules dragged to light the dog of hell. He imagines the situation of Delphi to have been determined by a mighty chasm in the hill, οὗτος χάσματος ἐν τῷ τόπῳ; and Apollo is said to have chosen it for an oracular shrine, on account of the effluvia which proceeded from it.

Ut vidit Pæan vastos telluris hiatus  
 Divinam spirare fidem, ventosque loquaces  
 Exhalare solum, sacris se condidit antris,  
 Incubuitque adyto: vatis ibi factus Apollo.

3. Those sacred grottos have often been mistaken for tombs. On the front of them were found representations of various kinds, but all allied with worship or adoration. Temples were frequently hewn out of the solid rock, and were considered more sacred than others. The Persians had magnificent specimens of this kind of architecture, as the temple of Mithras and others, near the plain of the Magi. The sacred grottos were placed sometimes on hills, and it has been supposed that the situation there was fixed upon on account of the strange noises and echoes which were heard on them. "It seems," says Bryant, "there

were some sacred hills in Persis, where, as people passed by, there were heard shouts, as of a multitude of people ; also hymns and exultations, and other uncommon noises. These sounds undoubtedly proceeded from the priests at their midnight worship," &c. The echoes from caverns were highly revered ; they excited solemn and religious feelings, and were associated with wood-nymphs, and other poetical creatures, who loved solitude and solitary places. That beautiful personation of Echo, in Milton's *Comus*, is recalled to mind :

" Sweet Echo, sweetest Echo that livest unseen  
 Within thy aery shell,  
 By slow Meander's margent green,  
 And in the violet-embroider'd vale,  
 Where the love-lorn nightingale  
 Nightly to thee her sad song mourneth well."

4. In such places as hollow vales, and among hanging woods, echoes are known to be abundant ; they are often heard also on rivers where the banks are high. Their effect is sometimes very startling, as they have been known to repeat ten or twelve syllables very articulately and distinctly, especially if quick dactyles are chosen. Those effects have not been overlooked by inquisitive naturalists, though to some the subject may appear trifling. It is observed by a modern writer, " that quick dactyles succeeded best (in his experiments) ; for when we came to try the echo's power in slow, heavy, embarrassed spondee, of the same number of syllables—

*Monstrum horrendum, informe, ingens —*

we could perceive but a return of four or five."

5. Jamblichus words the symbol differently—" Adore the sound of the whispering wind ;" but in reality there is no difference in the precept inculcated ; the adoration of

the whispering wind, of the echo, of those soft-breathing sighs in lonely places, is all one superstition. He thus interprets the symbol: "We ought to honour and love the resemblance or image of the divine essences and powers." Lilius Giraldus, on the contrary, taking a more comprehensive view, observes that the wind in the symbol represents revolts, seditions, and wars, while the echo is the emblem of desert places; and therefore Pythagoras exhorted his disciples to leave the towns where they found wars and sedition, and retire into solitary places, which are the retreat of Echo, as Ovid says:

*Inde latet sylvis, nulloque in monte videtur  
Omnibus auditur.*

6. We regard the symbol in much the same light as some others we have treated of, such as "when it thunders touch the ground," merely allusive to those deep, and solemn, and religious feelings excited by some phenomena of nature, as if the pious, the meditative, the humble soul of man enjoyed an actual consciousness of the presence of Divinity. There is no need we should adore the visible or sensible objects which tend to inspire those feelings, nor could such an obvious and puerile piece of superstition be intended in the symbol; but we may without impiety or irreverence seek them out and covet them as a stimulus to our religious feelings, which become deadened in the busy world. To the mind inclined to pious meditation, the whispering wind imparts a sweet melancholy that is peculiarly pleasing; solitude and low notes of music excite similar impressions; all soft, soothing, and delightful,—far different from that other state of religious emotion caused by the storm and the whirlwind.

ON UNWORTHY IDEAS OF GOD: THE MANIFESTATION OF GOD IN NATURE: EMOTIONS OF THE SUBLIME AN AID TO DEVOTION, &c.

~~~~~  
Symbol XLVII.—Cum tonat terram tangito.

When it thunders touch the ground.
 ~~~~~

1. IGNORANCE is confessed to be the parent of superstition. Where the human mind cannot explain any unusual phenomenon of nature, and when its faculties are paralyzed by fear and astonishment, it has attributed it to the immediate power of a supernatural agency. There are an infinite number of recurring events which excite no dread or surprise, because custom has reconciled the mind to them, one of which, happening at long intervals, and without any visible cause, would excite as strong emotions as an earthquake or a thunder-storm. Though knowledge has not yet elucidated all points connected with the phenomena of thunder and lightning (there are yet many doubts to be cleared up, many difficulties to be explained), yet knowledge has put them on their true basis as occurrences no less obedient to the laws of nature than any other—divesting them, therefore, of all superstitious tendency or supernatural origin. The only difference to us is, that the connection between cause and effect is less obvious than in ordinary cases.

2. Thunder was absurdly conceived to be a mark of the anger of the gods in ancient times ; even now it is sometimes so represented ; but we hope, for the sake of our nature, in a figurative sense ; it has also been called the voice of the Almighty speaking to man in the thunder and in the blast. Such ignoble ideas of God, which are too often promulgated, are as puerile as the fable of ancient mythology, in which Jupiter *Tonans* is figured as amusing himself, in his leisure moments, by casting thunderbolts among the puny race of man. Surely the anger of God is not a passion ; surely his voice not a mere sound, without articulation, and therefore unintelligible. Truer would it be to teach that his anger has no existence, and that a spirit can have no voice. But in religion, as in other things, men have been chiefly attracted by fables and popular representations, as we teach children history and morals. We may certify that those fables have at length created such a habit, that even well-educated men cannot divest themselves of the opinion that God is capable of anger (in the human sense), and that he has an articulate voice. We have already mentioned the gross notions men adopt, in the same way, of a spirit, and of the form of God.

Jupiter *Tonans* was represented as casting his thunderbolts from his very humble heaven, on the top of Mount Olympus, because the ignorant and vulgar mind can easier understand a visible than an invisible agency.

3. The intelligent and reflecting mind will not fall into superstition, because he knows that thunder is produced by natural causes ; nor will he be guilty of those other absurdities, because by meditation he has formed more worthy ideas of God ; but he cannot divest himself, nor



should he divest himself, of those salutary impressions of grandeur and sublimity, and divine power, created by thunder, and such awful phenomena of nature. So long as the soul of man has emotions of terror, and feelings of the sublime, he cannot witness those effects in the external world with insensibility. As a religious being, he cannot witness them without awe and devotion. In the power of the Creator, that makes the very earth tremble, and all the feeble fabrics of men totter to their foundations, we cannot but be sensible to the weakness, nay, utter helplessness, of the creature ; and the humility of our minds on such an occasion will urge us to " touch the ground " as a mark of that humility—as a testimony to the truth of the existence of a God in the world.

If solemnity in worship excite devotion, surely the solemn and sublimer scene of a thunder-storm cannot fail to stir up our souls with fervent zeal in the great temple of the universe. But this devotion, this fervency, this emotion of what is grand in nature, this irresistible feeling of the power of God, may exist without one particle of superstition, even though fear may be mixed up with them.

4. If we have capacity to enjoy the sublime, where can we better enjoy it than in the raging of a storm ? What in all nature can so effectually exalt our higher emotions than the terrible roar of thunder, the vivid flashes of lightning, whose course is so rapid as to baffle our sight ? Nature appears then in her grandest attire ; in all her majesty. She speaks no more in the still small voice ; riding on the clouds, she is seen to rule the tempest, and curb the whirlwinds. Her brow is darkened with the deep

purposes of creative energy ; her mission from the Almighty is stamped on her awful countenance.

5. Alas ! there are beings who cannot enter into this feeling of the sublime. Those grand displays that excite an unusual exaltation in the minds of poets and philosophers are scarcely felt by thousands and tens of thousands. What spiritualizes the souls of others seems to make them more earthly, more stupid, more phlegmatic. They crawl like worms upon the earth, and cannot raise their eyes to heaven. Psyche has lost her wings, and mixes with the dust ; once ethereal, she has sunk to the abyss of grossness and materialism. Feeding on things spiritual, things intelligible, in her pristine state, she now delights in nothing but what is tangible, and carnal, and earthly.

Those unhappy men—yet not unhappy but by comparison of what they lose—are insensible to the most refined pleasures man is permitted to enjoy here below. The good scarcely affects their dull souls ; the great only awakens them from their slumber ; the sublime but touches their eye-lids ; the beautiful fails in rousing them from lethargy. They live, but their existence rather resembles the tortoise or the oyster than the active and the immortal being.

6. There are many things perplex us in heaven and in earth ; many things are there not reconcilable with our philosophy ; many questions have arisen in our passage through life which we cannot solve, and this is one ;—Can such beings as those who cannot feel what is good or great on earth, be capable of entering into a heaven where all things must participate of the ideal good, of the ideal great, and beautiful ? Can souls so gross, so carnal, so

material, be equally blessed with those who have already a kind of foretaste of heaven in their own souls? Can he who is here but little elevated above the creatures that die and are no more for ever, be as fit for heaven as the intellectual and purer spirit, that may be said to tread already on the very footsteps of divinity; changing again into that image of his Maker lost once but found again? A poor consolation would it be to the philosopher to think that his labour, his reflections, his studies, are all in vain; and that, by forgetfulness of them, he emerges in another life on the same level as the most brutish or the most ignorant.

If our virtues prepare us for heaven, and are not lost, why should our other gifts, our intellectual stores, the results of wisdom and meditation, not go with us also? If there are degrees in heaven (a notion generally admitted), surely those different beings we have spoken of cannot there be on the same level? If this were so, the idea of human life being but a preparation for a purer, would be nothing but a fiction—a shadowless dream.

7. "When it thunders touch the ground." In the sensible manifestation of God's power, let us feel his presence and adore. The thunder may call up many sensations that are asleep; may inspire emotions which are laid aside, from that perpetual tendency in man to forget the Creator in the regularity and order of his works. The stimulating force of illness, or death among relatives, often recalls man to a sense of his duty—to the recollection of his neglect; and so the event of thunder may awake him from his fatal dream, and may stir up his indifference.

8. In Greece, the man who was killed by lightning was denied the rites of burial: among us it is often said that

such a death is a judgment of the Almighty ; the superstition is the same ; the cruelty equal. Let us be cautious in pronouncing an opinion in cases where we can be no judges, or, at best, presumptuous ones. How can we know them to be judgments of God ? We, poor feeble creatures who cannot see even the links in the chain of causes, would presume to a knowledge of the doings of the Almighty ! And by an arrogant assumption proceed to fix a stigma upon the memory of a fellow-creature as one cursed of God, because the lightning cuts him off suddenly in his earthly career ! True it is that all natural effects are of God as the primary cause ; but we may admit this and be consistent, though we may deny any of those effects to be produced by supernatural agency. It is manifest, that what are called judgments of God, are supposed to be caused by a direct act of his power, and therefore are supernatural or miraculous. It is only in this sense there can be any meaning in the judgment of God. To attribute a special judgment to every man who is suddenly killed, is only to perpetuate the superstition and illiberality of the Athenian sailors, who imputed to Diagoras, the atheist, the cause of the storm. It is a branch of that impiety we have so often condemned, of assimilating God to the nature of man. We first endow him with the passion of anger, and then proceed to discover in the accidents that befall man the fruits of that anger ; in a word, we judge of God by ourselves.

## ON SINCERITY IN RELIGION.

~~~~~  
Symbol XLVII.—*Ex imputatis vitibus ne Diis libato.*

Offer not to the gods the wine of an unpruned vine.
~~~~~

1. PLUTARCH has explained this symbol as if Pythagoras recommended agriculture as a great piece of piety, and exhorted men to offer nothing to the gods in a wild or savage state; but we think it may be more properly and more simply interpreted thus:—We ought to offer to God the best of every thing, for he loves such offerings as are pure and unblemished; or, in a higher view, that God should be first in all our thoughts; we must satisfy his claims before we think of our own, because, as the giver of all, and the proprietor of all, he is first entitled to the premices, or first-fruits, of every thing.

We find, by the Hebrew law, those conditions expressed and enforced which rendered sacrifices and sacrificial offerings acceptable to Him, such as freedom from spot and blemish; priority of birth as regarded animals (the firstlings of the flock), and the premices, or first-fruits of the ground—all typical or emblematical of the innocence and purity of the soul; of that innocence and simplicity which man should invest himself with who approaches the Creator.

2. Those rites and observances, those sacrifices and offerings are now no longer required as of old, because they are no longer necessary : the firstling may now peacefully browse on the neighbouring hill ; its blood, and the sacrifice of its innocent life, cannot avail in a religion before which all types and emblems have disappeared ; the material changed into the immaterial or spiritual. So the symbol of Pythagoras, though pointing to a material offering or libation to God, bears a secret and profounder reference to the spiritual nature of man as a religious being, in whose intercourse with God that purity is required in the heart, that innocence in the life, which rendered the firstlings and premices acceptable under the ancient Jewish law.

3. We owe to God the first and best of every thing. The libations we pour out to him must be the purest ; the offerings we make the simplest we can find. Such are the “ sighing of a contrite heart ;” sincerity and devotion in religious duties ; respect and obedience to his laws ; veneration for his holy name ; and an undying love of virtue and truth. We are bound to consider our duties to him before all other duties. He should be first in all our thoughts. The most valuable portions of our time are his due ; and in consideration of service to God every thing else must be laid aside or abandoned. For his sake we must think no sacrifice too great, but fulfil our duties with a free, willing, cheerful mind, as if the task were really one of pleasure and satisfaction, and not of necessity or of slavery. Our service must, therefore, not be cold or lukewarm, but zealous and fervent ; we must act and not profess ; and so act and think as if our souls were laid naked before him for inspection and examination ; for as the

"Searcher of hearts," every thought and desire is known intimately to him. Hollow professions, mere lip-service, and hypocrisy, he abhors : they must be foolish and absurd too, if we believe what we all ascribe to God—the attribute of Omniscience.

4. Sincerity is an unappreciable virtue. It is the foundation of all religion worthy of the name ; but, like many other virtues, it is rare in the world, though its counterfeit, profession, be common and vulgar ; perhaps more common now than at any other period of the history of man. Men are still deceived, as much as ever, by forms and ceremonies ; they still seem to think it of more importance in what manner God should be worshipped, than that he should be simply worshipped in "spirit and in truth." To them forms are potent in their influence ; and without them they seem to believe that the simple and sincere tribute of the heart cannot reach the gates of heaven. The greatest error of all is, that they impiously bring God to take a part in their disputes, their puerile quarrels, and their intolerance, as if He judged man as men judge each other. The cause of such lamentable error and weakness, we think, may be found in the practice of the world, which makes religion have two faces, like the door of Janus's temple, one for the external show, another for God ; in the struggle between which the latter disappears altogether in the former. As men soon mistake the form for the substance, the shadow for the reality, so we find it a common and prevalent error to rely on this exoteric manifestation of religion to the exclusion of the esoteric, or religion as the secret and hallowed intercourse between man and his Maker.

Men thus led on, hoodwinked by error, and deceived

... can save  
... the idea of dan-  
... can go  
... and inevitably  
... wise, or  
... yoke.

... above all, as  
... to catch  
... take no  
... every pas-  
... and stir up  
... or for  
... in the  
... a purification of  
... it is not  
... mercy to  
...

... or ceremo-  
... on that ac-  
... No prayers, how-  
... beautiful in lan-  
... of true sincerity  
... the simple aspiration of the soul,  
... is far more  
... than ten thou-  
... they may be set  
...

... of the Christian re-  
... who cannot in his mind  
... from the forms  
... mixed up with it in this world's

fe.  
befo.



As the country has been said to be the work of God, while towns and cities are the devices of men, so may it be said of the Christian religion as an institution in the world, contrasted with its manifestation in the Book of Life. The structures reared by human hands are indeed composed of materials drawn from Scripture—as the houses are all primarily, in the elements of construction, from nature—but they all partake too much of human pride, imbecility, and waywardness, to be mistaken for the work of God. For that beautiful simplicity and perfect harmony distinguishing the religion of Christ in the records of revelation, we may search the world in vain.

The student in his closet dreams that civilization and enlightenment of the mind are sure antidotes to complexity in religion; but when he emerges from his quiet retreat, he will soon be undeceived by actual experience, and may find a war at issue, or a contest proceeding, on points of form and ceremony as hotly as in any period of history.

The spirit of persecution and intolerance is not dead; it does not even sleep. But its power is gone; and may it be gone for ever!

## ON SIMPLICITY IN RELIGIOUS RITES.

---

**Symbol XLVIII.**—*Ne sine farina sacrificato.*  
*Never sacrifice without meal.*

---

1. THE Greeks, before they slew the victims about to be sacrificed, sprinkled on their heads barley-meal, sometimes mixed with salt, which was emblematical of purification; and, therefore, it may be supposed, at the first glance, that our philosopher intended by the symbol that nothing should be offered to God before it be thoroughly purified and made worthy of him. But as it is related of him, and with a great show of probability, that he disapproved of bloody sacrifices, or the sacrifice of animals being made, and substituted in their stead images formed of meal, we may conceive that he meant secretly to enjoin upon his disciples the expediency of abandoning the public mode of worship, and adopting a more simple mode, agreeably to their higher notions of the Divine power.

This injunction would apply more particularly to human sacrifices, which he considered degrading to man and offensive to the gods: a vile custom, the offspring of a rude and ignorant age, which he found the Egyptian priests abandon as odious and barbarous, and to substitute images of the persons to be sacrificed instead. At

the rising of the Nile a human being was once sacrificed to the god ; but in time the practice was condemned, and an image, or small statue, was found to answer the purpose quite as well.

2. In this laudable endeavour to uproot a bad custom, Pythagoras seemed only to return to the simple, pure, and primitive worship of mankind, when, as Porphyry affirms, the first-fruits of the earth alone were presented to God, and such simple offerings as wheat, figs, and cakes, which were used in the Athenian processions in honour of the sun and the hours. " As barley first appeared after leguminous substances, the race of men used it in primitive sacrifices, moistening it for this purpose with water." It was long after this that men fell away from the simple worship, and immolated animals, and then human creatures, to their bloodthirsty deities. Empedocles, in referring to that age of gold, and those ancient religious rites, says, " Nor then were altars wet with blood of bulls irrationally slain."

It is glorious in all ages to find examples of men in which the image of God is still visible, though crime, the most odious customs, the most dreadful superstition, and the most degraded ignorance, prevailed. Even amid the most appalling obscurity ; amid that universal gloom when God seemed to have forsaken the world, and left men to their own brutal passions ; when scarcely a ray of light breaks forth to give hope of change or amendment, we find noble spirits, great minds, with unexpected energy and discrimination, penetrate the chaotic mass, and discern the true God among a rabble of licentious and impure deities, and the truth among a hopeless confusion of lies and falsehood.

These men possessed lofty ideas of the purity, and perfection, and unity of God ; but so corrupt was the world, so enamoured of the slavish doctrines and degrading practices inculcated by the priests, that they dared not, for the sake of life, speak aloud, but vented their opinions in detached ideas (as if accidentally expressed), or in dark enigmatical phrases not to be penetrated by the vulgar, and, therefore, not to be turned against them for their destruction.

3. From several of those detached sentences or expressions (like gems glittering amid heaps of fables and rubbish), we may also collect a truth which is often overlooked even by Christians ; that a gift or offering to God is not acceptable because of any idea of intrinsic value, or extrinsic beauty, but by reason only of the spirit in which it is dedicated. "Apollo loved the cakes of Docimus more than all the hecatombs of tyrants." When a Thesalian was sacrificing to the Pythian deity hecatombs, and oxen with gilded horns, in which the hundred bulls had their blood sprinkled on a hundred altars, while a hundred priests in all the paraphernalia and solemnity of office assisted at the mighty oblation, the god exclaimed that the offering of Hermioneus was more gratifying, though he had only offered up so much meal as he could take with his three fingers out of a sack.

" Pious th' oblation which with frankincense  
And *popanum*\* is made ; for in the fire  
Both these, when placed, divinity accepts."

The same excellent sentiment may be discovered in

\* A round flat cake.

The sacred cakes of the ancients were generally mixed with honey, and are often mentioned or alluded to in the tragic writers. They were

several ancient writers ; as in Perseus, for example, who says,—

“ Compositum jus fasque animo, sanctosque recessus  
Mentis, et incoctum generoso pectus honesto  
Hæc cædo, admoveam templis, et ferre litabo.”

Thus rendered by Dryden :—

“ A soul where laws both human and divine  
In practice more than speculation shine ;  
A genuine virtue of a vigorous kind,  
Pure in the last recesses of the mind ;  
When with such offerings to the god I come ;  
A cake thus given, is worth a hecatomb.”

4. If the interpretation we have given to this symbol be correct, we must highly commend it ; for simplicity in worshipping God is not so easy of attainment, if we may judge of the practice of men in all ages. It is more to be commended when issuing from the lips of a pagan, to whom pomp and outward display were everyday sights ; more to be commended when we know that he had been initiated into all the mysteries of Egypt, and accustomed, therefore, to behold a magnificence of religious rites, not approached in his own country. But he had that sound sense—which all should have who are really religious—that enabled him to distinguish virtue and piety from their mere accessories,—sincerity from the outward tokens.

crossed with two lines intersecting each other, and were hence called *quadra*, from the four divisions presented.

This peculiar superstition is mentioned by Jeremiah (chap. xlv. 19). “ *When we burned incense to the Queen of Heaven, and poured out drink-offerings unto her, did we make her cakes to worship her, and pour out drink-offerings unto her without our men.*”

Also (chap. vii. 18). “ *The children gather wood and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead their dough to make cakes to the Queen of Heaven.*”

to a parent who begot us, we owe at least as much affection and gratitude to the Being who first created us. But we owe much more to him ; because it is of him we live and move, and without an act of his spontaneous goodness, we never could have been. As far, therefore, as the simple feeling of gratitude for existence is concerned, we owe all to him ; to him, therefore, we owe the first-fruits, or best part of our affection. The Christian philosopher might thus give expression to his meditations on this point :—  
“ To have been begot by a certain parent, or the relationship in which the child stands to the father, is an accident, as far as each is concerned ; for it was not the parent that called me the individual into existence ; my existence, in relation to him, was no voluntary act on the part of either. But with God my particular being was no accident, no involuntary act, but the sure determinate result of his will. And why he ever willed that I should be, unless that act was spontaneous and full of goodness, I cannot understand. To me he could owe nothing ; to him I owe my existence, and more than bare existence—I owe all things. Again, if the parent beget, it is all he does ; he, indeed, nourishes and clothes, and, as far as he can, sustains ; but life, and the continuance of life, depend not upon any efforts of his, unless the Source of Being wills to sustain and continue that life. Why he should continue and sustain that life, unless it flows from his goodness, I cannot understand. That any particular being can be necessary to him, is not to be admitted.”

3. To this Being, then, as the Creator first, and secondly as the Preserver, we owe duty, affection, and gratitude. But when we consider who and what he is ; the Creator of all things ; the Almighty sustainer of the universe ; the conde-

ascending Giver of all good, and who is good; the only source of wisdom, who is therefore all-wise; the Being who has alone all power in heaven and in earth; the only Eternal, all else being from him, as cause and original; we cannot surely approach him, even in adoration, but with the deepest humility,—with an humbleness of spirit, and prostration of soul, that becomes the creature, when, in familiar language, he comes into the presence of his Creator. To adore him, and sacrifice bare-foot, is but an emblem of that humility, an outward and visible mark of that humbleness of spirit. It is not required of us, as rational beings, to worship abjectly, and appear to be rather the slaves of the Almighty than free-born sons; as do the Indians, and other besotted nations, who worship with abject fear and trembling, and try to propitiate their deity (considered, therefore, as a kind of demon) by impure, and often sanguinary rites. The worship God requires of us is deep veneration and love; as if all our worship flowed spontaneously from a belief in his utter holiness and boundless goodness, and not extorted by fear, or the dread of his power.

4. Those savages, who tremble and quake before their imaginary deities, believe them to possess passions and feelings similar to their own, magnified in proportion to their superior power, and behold in the storm, in the thunder, in the lightning, in the fury of the winds and raging sea, in the earthquake and hurricane, in the darkened sky and the troubled clouds, only awful manifestations of their angry and malignant nature; but when the same power that raised the storm, and rode on the whirlwind, quells them, and restores nature to peace and serenity, they are not so sensible to those silent and equable tokens

of his providential goodness, daily displayed before their eyes.

The goodness of God is so permanent, so steady, so abiding, that we have lost our sensibility to it. It is only in the grand and soul-subduing pangs of nature, that we are fully alive to his power. We groan and weep under one affliction, one pang, let us say, of his anger; but we forget the manifold acts of his goodness and mercy. For one act of *apparent* evil (for all evil is not real) do we not enjoy ten thousand spontaneous acts of love? It is from the reliance on the permanency of his goodness, that we are so terribly afflicted by any evil we hastily consider to be the effect of his displeasure. So lethargic is the soul of man, that he no more feels the benevolence and tending care of God, than he is sensible to the beauty of the external world, which is not seen *habitually*, because it is no longer a novelty.

5. A Christian may be permitted to admire those words put into the mouth of the Pythian Apollo: "I dwell with less pleasure in the resplendent heavens, than in the souls of pious men." Or those similar ones attributed, as Hierocles affirms, to some ancient philosopher: "God has not upon earth a place more fit for him to dwell in than a pure soul." Where else can he dwell? As of old, he no longer dwells in temples made with hands. The Adytum no more shews forth his glory. The heavenly light, the symbol of his holiness, no longer illuminates the secret places of the temple. Though the glory of his presence be no more visible to the eye, it may be felt and known to be where every Christian, in faith, hopes to feel it,—in the deep places of his own soul. His spirit, or presence, is not circumscribed, as in the temple of old, or the holy ark;



it is every where, and circumscribed only in its operations, by the obstinacy and wickedness of men. If that awful presence is too pure to dwell in temples made with hands, how can it come there when the mind of man is as full of sins as the temple at Jerusalem was filled with covetous money-changers, who, by implied extortion and dishonesty, defiled the place where God was wont to dwell, manifestly? We find men awfully impious in arrogating to themselves the abiding presence of God, or the possession of his spirit; and what is worse, raising theories, dogmas, and what they call creeds, out of the impure depths of their imagination, to prove the actual presence of God; as if preordained necessity constrained his Spirit to be where it cannot be; amid falsehood, deceit, hypocrisy, and such like outward garments in which the evil spirit of the world clothes himself, to pass as an angel of light. Men may be deceived; God cannot. Wicked men may palm themselves on us as saints; but be sure the Spirit of God is not there. To believe that he must be there—by prerogative of office—and for no other reason, is indeed what might have made Democritus weep, and the pagans wonder, as an instance of the presumption and impiety of the human mind.

# ON RELIGIOUS SIGNS AND FORMS: AND TRUE HUMBLENESS OF MIND.

~~~~~  
Symbol 2.—*Adoraturus sedeto.*
Sit down when you worship.
 ~~~~~

1. THE *mode* of worshipping God must be indifferent to Him; but it is not so, nor ever has been, a matter of indifference to man. In religious rites and observances, forms cannot be altogether avoided; in public worship they are, in a degree, necessary. In truth, the very language we employ is a form, identically the same as any other sign. In words, for example, we express our humility, and in bending the knee we do the same, by a sign, without language. The expression, therefore, by signs, will differ in nations as we find language differ. To expect an uniformity in customs or gestures, in religious worship, were to look for an impossibility. Nations having different ways of giving expression to feelings or emotions, will vary their signs in the same way. What primarily determine those signs, is too profound, and too laborious a question, to enter upon here. Suffice it to say, that nations differ, and have differed, in their mode of worshipping, as religious sects are found to differ. The Jews pray standing; the Mahometans cast themselves on the

ground, in abject humility; Christians sometimes kneel; sometimes stand in praying. Genuflection appears not to have been known among the Greeks; they either prayed sitting or standing. If we were allowed to draw a distinction, we should say, that kneeling is a deeper sign of humility, but in sitting down we are more at ease; and while the body is unconstrained, the mind will be more tranquil. Plutarch excellently observes, that the symbol enjoins us never to pray, or commune with God, in the hurry of our affairs; as if it were an act of no importance or solemnity; but when we are at leisure, and when our minds are in a fit tone for so holy an action. To sit down, in the temple of God, instead of standing up, indicates this tone of mind, and implies a desire to remain some time within its sacred walls: we may quietly compose our thoughts in this posture, and, if we choose, abstract our minds from the world we have left.

2. A truly religious spirit seeks for retirement in public worship; he desires to shun observation, and close the eye from all external objects. It is the Pharisee who seeks the conspicuous steps of the temple, and groans aloud in mock repentance.

If observation is to be eluded in the public temple; the humble spirit will seek for that solitude where no eye can see him; when, in his secret moments, he communes with God. He will, without prompting, use that posture which he finds appropriate: whether he kneels, or sits, or stands, he knows they are but signs, and are useless and hollow when there are no corresponding emotions in the soul. He has a false opinion of God, who believes the sign to be essential; an impious opinion, if he imagines God can be deceived by it. If the mere service of the lip prevail not,

neither will the bodily sign, though we prostrate ourselves ever so low—ever so abjectly. The sighing of the contrite heart may prevail, while our most eloquent words may never reach the confines of heaven.

3. Private prayer is above all things to be encouraged. For man is less likely to be the hypocrite, or the mere formalist, when alone with God, than in the public assembly. We know that we are not what we profess to be, before men; and we are certain we cannot deceive God. Human pride, self-love, and outward appearances, cannot, but with supreme folly, be paraded when alone in the presence of One who knows better than our self-love will allow us to think, all our weaknesses, our very nothingness. For a time, at least, our purple and pride are laid aside, and a recurrence of the act will have its effect. It will either do good, or the practice will be abandoned; for we must be sensible of the impiety of praying privately, when we intend nothing but a ceremony. There is no worldly advantage to be gained, and why should the habit be continued, when we know it is only a habit? Now, in public worship, it may be our interest not to dispense with appearances; in a worldly point of view, they may be at some time an actual benefit; and, therefore, there is reason and a motive for maintaining the custom, though our professions be as hollow and insincere, as they were in our private devotions.

4. It is clear, then, that though public worship, and the most scrupulous attention to all its requirements, may not leave one trace of piety or goodness behind—prayer, in private, cannot fail in due time to be attended with good results. As already said, we must either continue or abandon it. No man can habitually and privately be a

hypocrite to God, and believe at the same time there is a God ; and that he is the hearer and answerer of prayers.

True it is that man is a perpetual deceiver to himself, and often thinks he prays, when he only repeats a form of prayer. As the world is pleased to think, those who attend public worship are religious ; so he also falls into the notion that he must be religious too ; though his religion be no deeper than a ceremony ; his piety not more real or substantial, than compliance with certain formulæ of speech and action. Such a character would hardly be admissible among followers of the prophet ; among Christians he is worse than a heathen. Professing to be a disciple of the Christian religion, he is as ignorant of its nature, its demands, its purposes, as if he had first seen the light of day in an African desert.

## ON RELIGIOUS PRIDE.

~~~~~  
Symbol XX.—*Ad sacrificia ungues ne præcidito.*
Parse not your nails during the sacrifice.
 ~~~~~

1. HUMILITY is a virtue necessary in worship, whether public or private ; no less necessary, no less proper is it, in drawing near to God, to banish from our minds all thoughts not suitable to such an occasion ; to avoid every act, or word, or thought, of a mean kind, when about to perform the greatest of all our duties. Among those things signified by paring of the nails, we may number idle thoughts, impure desires, worldly recollections, dreams of avarice, and other floating feelings and ideas, so apt to obtrude themselves on us on such solemn occasions. He who goes into the temple, and there indulges in reflections on business, is guilty of paring his nails during the sacrifice. The money-changers in the temple are examples of men, who will even make the temple of God the arena of their vices or passions.

2. Jamblichus, we find, perhaps with more fancy than truth, supposes the symbol refers to the propriety, during sacrifice, of being reconciled to those we have quarrelled with ; as, at such times, family quarrels are most unseemly ; and that men should invite their meanest rela-

tives, and be reconciled to them, as family pride is most offensive to God. Any kind of pride, indeed, on such an occasion, as worshipping the Creator, is contemptible—nay, ridiculous.

It may be said, that to God all men are equal ; he respects not persons ; and in the temple of God this equality must exist, though the pride of man may choose to draw artificial lines of separation and division. There pride is far more odious than in the world. More odious to man ; most offensive to God. There alone dare the poor man say, “ I am equal—made by the same God—endowed with the same immortality ;” for, alas ! the accessories of poverty impress upon his mind, the awful distance which separates him from the rich and the noble on other occasions. He may bless God that He is not like poor, silly man—the worm of the earth ; that worm which exults in the front of Jove—attracted by a courtly dress, by a magnificent equipage, by ‘ troops of friends.’ He has reason to rejoice that a pious heart, under rags, will be accepted. That Christ is peculiarly the friend of the poor. He may rejoice that the apparent inequality here shall be to his advantage hereafter ; that he who despises and tramples on him here, in all the pride of life, and with all the power which wealth brings in its train, may wish in vain to be equal in heaven, where all finds its level.

God strips from off man the gaudy trappings of state ; he tears into rags the gorgeous robes that cover diseases or wickedness, and beholds man in all his naked deformity. Through the tattered garment of the poor man He can see virtue, if it exist, and by that virtue he shall be valued. In a rough, homely exterior, God can discover a diamond, when haughty man cannot, or will not. All

other distinctions are valueless to him. The rough-set diamond is more precious in his sight than the glittering star in the crown of royalty.

A diamond,  
Though set in horn, is still a diamond,  
And sparkles as in purest gold.

3. Certainly pride to God in his temple may be contrasted with the parings of the nails. It may be ranked among those mean and improper passions which man should leave behind him, and tremble to bring into such a place. He has no religion in his soul who comes there puffed up with pride, vanity, or self-love. It were a higher mark of respect to the All-seeing, if he refrained from ever polluting the threshold of his courts. In this state and frame of mind, looking down with contempt on the poor worshippers, saying in his heart, "Thank God I am not such as these;" how can his devotion be pleasing to God? How can it be otherwise than abhorrent, when all the secret rottenness of his heart is exposed amid his ostentatious piety? Let him ponder on his wealth; let him consider the blessings he enjoys, with the toleration of God; but let him remember, amid his reflections, that Christ, the Saviour he believes in, as the author of the religion in whose sacred rites he is joining, was poor; that the apostles, whose works and labours form part of that religion, were also poor; that the first founders of the Christian faith were all poor, while its enemies were the rich and powerful, such as himself; that it is said the rich man can hardly be saved; that the lover of riches cannot be saved; that the shafts of Christ's weapons were directed against men proud in their generation; that meekness and lowliness of mind are essential virtues to a real Christian;



and then contrast these things with his own state, and see whether he has not cause rather of woe than for exultation.

It were superfluous to say, that in worship the thoughts should be suitable to such an occasion ; that no extraneous ideas should be allowed to distract the attention ; but it is necessary here to suggest a more active state of mind—namely, an effort to elevate the soul towards God ; to exalt it ; sublimate it, if I may so say, to the spiritual atmosphere of divine things.

## ON RELIGIOUS MUSIC: ITS USE AND ADVANTAGES.

~~~~~  
Symbol III.—*Libamina diis facito per auriculam.*
Make libations to the gods by the ear.
 ~~~~~

1. WHEN we know the partiality of our philosopher for music, and the uncommon opinion he had of its power in refining human nature, and in working out the excellencies of the mind and heart, we cannot be surprised he should recommend us to use it freely in our praises to God. Music was believed in ancient times to have originally come from heaven ; Pythagoras called it the gift of the gods to man ; and therefore no purer offering could be made to them than that which came from them ; no more acceptable libations could be presented than the prayers and thanksgivings of men, accompanied by that divine strain of melody, by which Homer says the divinities were ravished when emitted from the lyre of Apollo. Here is an eloquent passage from Sir Thomas Browne, which might have fallen from the pen of any philosopher of the Pythagorean school :—

“ There is something in music of divinity more than the ear discovers ; it is an hieroglyphical and shadowed lesson of the whole world and creatures of God ; such a melody to the ear, as the whole world well-understood,

would afford the understanding. In brief, it is a sensible fit of that harmony which intellectually sounds in the ear of God."

2. It is not, however, for the delight of God that music is to be recommended in our adoration (for we cannot countenance those mythologic ideas of ancient times), but for the benefit of man. The example we have in the Royal Psalmist of Judea, and general practice of the Hebrews, who sung praises to God, accompanied by a variety of musical instruments ; and why should we think such an example not to be followed by Christians ? If the effect be good to the soul, the habit is not to be neglected nor despised. And who can deny that the solemn strains of music (appropriate to the occasion) elevate the thoughts, and exalt, as well as purify, the feelings ? Before all things music prepares the mind for the reception of religious impressions, because its effect is immediate ; pouring through the ears down to the very depths of the heart ; before all things it tends to abstract the thoughts, and elevate them above the world ; before all things it impresses directly on the mind the sacredness, the holiness, of our duties to God. One of its great uses is to prepare the soil for the divine seed ; to dissipate the associations of business, or worldly avocations, and concentrate the soul's emotions to the proper performance of worship.

3. It is obvious, that to produce these results, the music employed must be of the simplest kind, otherwise we shall be led to consider the music as a source of pleasure, instead of a help to our devotion. Solemn music is the most appropriate, because it may be divested of artificial sounds without losing any of its effect ; the slow, simple cadence of its notes has a simple melody which no-

thing can surpass. It is thus, perhaps, that the organ, in its deep and soothing melody, is so appropriate to public worship. The very tones of the instrument seem wonderfully to harmonize with the feeling of devotion. Add to it the human voice, and we can conceive no better vehicle for our praises.

4. It is supposed Pythagoras used the lyre in his devotions. Before all other instruments it was imagined to emit music that resembled the divine and eternal melody of the spheres; and it was the instrument sacred to the god of music, from whose strings he brought forth those sounds which enchanted all heaven. It was especially his choice for this reason, and because it seemed the best of all instruments to accompany the human voice. It could adapt its tones to every variety of feeling, and reach the sublime, as well as descend and touch the deepest feelings of grief and lamentation. Soft and gentle in its strains, the voice of praise would rise above it, and audible expression be given to the feelings and emotions swelling the breast of the singer.

5. The Christian may readily pass over the mystic powers ascribed to music; its divine origin, and such notions as the ancients clothed it with; for he possesses a loftier revelation, that leads him to a better knowledge of God, and a more correct knowledge of the duties and obligations of man. He may not admit that God can be soothed or propitiated by music, but he may consistently agree with the symbol before us, that, for his own sake, it is meet and good to make libations to God by the ear; in other words, to sing his praises with music.

TRUE  
ON FALSE SCIENCE AND ~~IMPOSTURE~~; &c.

~~~~~  
Symbol XIII—*In astrum ne digitum intendito.*
Point not the finger at the stars.
~~~~~

1. WHETHER we hold with some that the stars are gods ; or with others, the habitations of gods ; or with more, that they are neither one nor the other ; or with a few, that they have a certain astrologic influence on man ; on whose motions, positions, juxta-positions, depend the destiny of man ; or, finally, whether we disbelieve in the existence of such beings, and such a power ; the force and propriety of the precept shall remain the same, in its theological acceptation, namely, condemn not the Supreme Power.

In its more confined application, it enjoins us not to point the finger of scorn to those who are rulers in the kingdoms of men ; for the demoniacal powers, who were supposed to inhabit the stars, were considered as subordinate rulers and agents in the affairs of earth ; their duty it was to fulfil the commands of the superior deities ; in promoting the welfare of the human race, and in acting more especially as guardian powers or angels to those individuals who were assigned to them.

2. There is something beautiful and pleasing in that

branch of the ancient mythology, which represents the air full of spirits; the rivers haunted by nymphs; and the woods peopled with fawns; there is something still more pleasing, and more natural, in the idea of every man having his angelic guardian; every Telemachus his Mentor; every Socrates his demon-friend. Such delightful fancies still, in some measure, retain their hold over the mind of man. And if for good, why should he reject the belief, though it be but a dream and shadowless hallucination? While he possesses imagination, deep and sportive fancy, why not play and gambol with their airy creations? If man assert his disbelief in aerial beings, and all spiritual existences, he still creates them for the pleasure of the mind, in poetry and painting. Though their existence be denied, they exist, nevertheless, in the wild imagination, that flies from the hard and *real* belief of the world. There is something not unpleasing, too, in the Platonic idea of the stars being the final resting-places of "just men made perfect." So long as man thinks of a heaven, he will most surely *localize* his heaven; and why not in the stars? perhaps globes of perfect matter floating in pure ether.

3. In this real, unimaginative, matter-of-fact age, astrology, necromancy, magic, divination, and such like ethereal sciences, are only known as the dreams and fooleries of bygone times. Men will now agree with the words of Media, who scorned divination when she found herself the victim of crime and misfortune.

———" I have seen  
How vain, how full of falsehoods is the skill  
Of the divining seers; nor is there aught  
Of firm assurance in the blazing fires,  
Or in the voice of birds."

4. The small band of astrologers (if there be any left in the rout of science) will doubtless sigh over a world, that confides nothing to the imagination; that believes nothing of man's fancy; that believes nothing but what can be seen, felt, or understood (intolerable terms, ignoble conditions); that acquiesces in those awfully ironical words of the true prophet of God, which display the baseless foundation and nerveless power of astrologers and soothsayers,—" *Let now the astrologers, the star-gazers, the monthly prognosticators, stand up and save thee.*"

The astrologer may still work out his calculations, his horoscopes; he may emblazon awful figures on the sacred page; draw lines; erect mansions; but they are profitless. There are, alas! none to reward (if he be in quest of gain); none to admire (if applause be his desire); none to believe (if conversion be his object); and he finds, that where no dupes are, the impostor's occupation is clean gone.

The *Magus*, where is he? He who in ages passed away, " *falsis terroribus implet!*" he who had dominion over spirits of the air, and demons of the deep; who could drag the prince of the air from his infernal palace, to whose high behests all lower spirits were subject—where is he? Echo answers where? But truth, from the bottom of her crystal well, proclaims another answer, and a better. Science, *i. e.*, knowledge of nature, and Nature's laws, has driven magic to its darksome cave, there to be bound for ever. As the Sun of Righteousness arose with healing on his wings, and sprinkled the glittering dew on the moral world; so Science, handmaid of Wisdom, arose, and scattered the light of truth over the natural world; and drove to their hiding-places the errors, the superstition, and frauds of men. The power of science in driving

away the spirits, said to be conjured up by magicians, may be resembled to the genial influence of Aurora, in expelling the shades of night, so beautifully expressed by Shakespeare,—

“ And yonder shines Aurora’s harbinger;  
At whose approach, ghosts, wandering here and there,  
Troop home to churchyards: damned spirits all,  
That in cross ways and floods have burial,  
Already to their wormy beds are gone.”

5. Science has routed the dreamy host of magicians, and tumbled to the earth the shadowy fancies of necromancy; the *science* of astrology, so called, has met the fate of falsehood and imposture; the arts of divination and soothsaying, and alchymy, have, like their compeers, met the same irrevocable fate. Their origin was in ignorance; their chief support, superstition. **FALSE**

Science will have demonstration; will have proof; the assumptions of credulity satisfy her not; the existence of supernatural agency is what she denies; much less will she admit the power of man over the realm of spirits, or over the laws of nature. The whole structure of science is built on the ~~certainty~~ **GUESSES** and regularity of those laws; and any deviation, by the caprice of man, or by the operations of good or evil spirits, never enters, as a possibility, the scientific mind. The observation of nature gives facts; facts make truths; isolated truths are brought together to make up doctrines; and those truths and doctrines are what we call science, when formed into one united system. The astrologer despises this tedious mode of arriving at the truth of things; he takes the royal road to science, and assumes what should first be proved—the influence of the stars and planets on the destiny of man. In this course he would be supported by the great body of men



(hence the ~~secret of his power~~), because it is in this way that we find most men reason in the world. But as science gained upon his footsteps, demanding the *wherefore* of his belief, the reasons for his assertions, in self-defence he had to take refuge in a kind of inductive ratiocination, but which could no more bear minute examination than the other: he illustrated the truth of his science by examples collected by himself, of the truth of his prophetic spirit in the lives of individuals; and, like those who would confirm a belief in the ghosts of the defunct, he would overwhelm the mind with fit examples in actual experience. It has so happened, however, whether from man's incredulity or obstinacy, we cannot affirm, that the multifarious proofs of astrologic science have failed to carry conviction to the mind; just as the numberless stories of ghosts and spirits have never secured a convert. Time, therefore, instead of increasing the number of professors or devotees, has gradually weeded them out, so that we cannot positively say whether a single specimen could be produced.

6. Where dupes are, there impostors shall be gathered together. Dupes are not yet an extinct race, like magicians and astrologers; if they do not flourish as abundantly as in former times, they are still a numerous body. Vulgar wonder and ignorant credulity must have their stimulants, now as ever, and hence fit substitutes have been found for the ~~extinct arts~~ in Phrenology, Mesmerism, Animal Magnetism, and such like; which, although making few converts among men of science, and none among men of wisdom, possess many eager disciples. They will have their day, till others come into rivalry with them having all the fresh fascinations of wonder and novelty.

7. Man is not satisfied with things plain and obvious. He longs after the sweets of forbidden waters. He is delighted, like a child, with what is new and wonderful ; while sometimes a deeper curiosity fosters the desire of knowing more than can be known ; that prompts him rashly, if not impiously, to lift up the veil of Isis, and pry into the secrets and mysteries of nature. Though his curiosity be in vain, like La Mancha in the magician's cave, he will imagine what he has never seen, and rear a fanciful structure of marvels, and mysteries, and mystic arts, which the breath of reason could at once dissolve into its original nothingness. The imagination uncontrolled converts all things to itself ; with its own peculiar hue—beautiful in some things, but illusory in all—it tinges all the speculations of the mind. In every thing it finds a wonder, a mystery. Nature herself, which every progressive step of real knowledge shews to be immutable, regular, orderly, and systematic, becomes in the eye of imagination wayward and capricious. Her works are simple ; they become complex and mysterious ; they are uniform in design and execution ; they become distorted by fanciful ideas of *lusus naturee*, horrible and monstrous productions of all kinds, in which ominous and portentous occurrences are mixed up, till the reasoning man is frightened by the monsters of his own creation.

8. It is true that science has opened the gates of truth, and dispelled the dreams of false knowledge ; but no one can assert, that man has any greater knowledge of the secret powers and hidden agency of nature than he had in the palmy days of mystic science. This is knowledge which shall, perhaps, never be attained. Man, seeing the futility of prying into these mysteries, has abandoned the useless

attempt, and turned his mind to other branches of knowledge which are within the scope of his power and reason. He now relies upon observation and experiment. But in former times it was to those veiled secrets of nature that speculative philosophers applied themselves, while they contemned that more useful walk of knowledge which we now contentedly traverse. Behold the difference between the past and the present!

THE AUTHOR  
IS MISGUIDED, PREJUDICED  
BIGOTED ABOUT  
ASTROLOGY, DIVINATION  
ETC.

HE SETS HIMSELF  
UP AS AN ORACLE  
BUT SPEAKS NONSENSE

ON LOYALTY, CIVIL GOVERNMENT, AND PUBLIC  
LIBERTY.

~~~~~  
Symbol XIV.—*Coronam ne vellito.*

Tear not the crown to pieces.
~~~~~

1. WE have a feeling of great deference to the opinions of learned men ; even their weaknesses are viewed with indulgence, as men following the same craft support and defend each other. But their errors, when we find them, cannot be treated so leniently, as then we should be guilty of a violation of truth. The mere vanity or ostentation of discovering a blemish in a masterpiece believed to be perfect, or of exalting our learning at the expense of others, has no place here.

In the interpretation of this excellent symbol Dacier appears to have fallen into a great error, which we have carefully rectified by substituting the above solution. " This symbol," it is observed, " may be explained several ways ; at least I find it may have three interpretations. First, ' *That we ought not to spoil the joy of the company by uneasiness and melancholy ;*' for it was the custom at feasts to wear crowns of flowers. Secondly, ' *That we ought not to transgress the laws of our country ;*' for the laws of cities are their crowns ; and this is the sense St

Hierome has followed, '*Coronam minime carpendam, id est, leges urbium conservandas.*' And, Thirdly, '*That we ought not to speak ill of princes, nor injure their reputation,*' which agrees with the saying of Solomon in Ecclesiastes, '*In cogitatione tua Regi ne detrahas.*'" He may have made the number even by a fourth,— "*That wives ought not to injure their husbands,*" for husbands are the crowns of their wives.

2. Three, much less four, interpretations of a Pythagorean symbol cannot be admissible, and they differing in a great degree in sense from each other. Jerome may be right, or Dacier may be right, but both cannot be right. We cannot find, by all our research, that at ancient symposiums the guests, when melancholy or displeased, were wont to tear their crowns. Dacier, indeed, does not affirm so much; but that surely is the legitimate inference from his interpretation. Neither is the logic, as we may shew, according to the strict Aristotelian process. 1. Tear not the crown. 2. The ancients wore festive crowns. 3. Ergo, to tear a crown was the token of melancholy or uneasiness. If the consequence followed in strictly logical inference from the premises, what should we think of the politeness of the Greeks who, in this manner, defied all the rules of even common decency.

Passions externally develop themselves by various signs. The sign of the passion of anger, for example, is very different from melancholy. To tear a crown in pieces evidently indicates a violent action, and points to rage rather than to melancholy as the cause.

To call laws the crowns of cities seems a very violent metaphor; and, with respect to the third view, we cannot comprehend how tearing a crown can be explained by

“ speaking ill of princes ;” for, as Hierocles judiciously observes of these symbols, the literal should be observed as well as the hidden sense. Besides, strictly to obey such a law would be to tie up the tongue of truth—an act very far from the policy or character of Pythagoras, who seems to have been uncommonly bold in his strictures on princes, and their abuse of arbitrary power.

3. “ To be loyal,” our interpretation of the symbol, means due respect and reverence for the sovereign power of the nation, whether a monarchy, or any other form of government. And loyalty implies also strict and unconditional obedience to the laws which in all nations are, by a fiction of the mind, supposed to be enacted for the benefit of all, without any partiality or preference for any class.

The crown of a kingdom is the symbol of its constitutional power, as a balance is the type of justice, and a sword of the military power ; and to tear the crown in pieces is to use violence to the supreme power of the state, or to subvert the fundamental law on which all governments are founded. The supreme power of the state may be lodged in one or several persons ; but it is properly one, and indivisible ; for a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand, as we are told on the highest authority. In a well and wisely constituted monarchy (the best form of government yet known), this power is invested in one head or person, who, through that great trust, becomes sacred in the eyes of the people. If we can imagine the inhabitants of a country arranging themselves into a firm and settled form of government, and choosing from among themselves a head or king to rule over them, we might reasonably infer that they would, first of all, invest him with the supreme power, and then subsequently pass laws

to exactly define the extent of this power, and to restrict its exercise within due bounds, so that public liberty might be inviolably preserved. The permanence of the government would depend on the inviolability of the supreme power; and as all would be individually interested in the maintenance of the form of government chosen, they would enact such laws as to constitute it the highest of civil crimes to encroach on, or injure, or disturb, this power; and the king being the receptacle or guardian of this sacred treasure, it would follow that his very person would be considered sacred; and that to injure him in his person would be regarded in the same light as an attack on the supreme power of the state.

The advantages which would be found to follow by confiding the supreme power to one person, as freedom from conflicting interests and opinions, more unity in the executive authority, fewer civil broils and contentions, and such like, would lead to another important step,—in entrusting this power, in hereditary succession, to one family, so as still to secure those advantages in a higher degree.

4. It is, then, the office of a king to rule wisely, justly, and happily, as may be; and it is the duty of his subjects to obey the laws, and respect the civil power. The king, in such nations where despotic or arbitrary power does not exist, has obligations to perform as well as the people; and he is, in a measure, responsible to them for the fulfilment of the contract, implied in giving power on certain conditions, and within defined limits. He is bound to obey the moral and civil laws of the country he rules over as well as any of his subjects; and, over and above, he is eminently responsible for the great and important trust confided to his care. So great a trust is this, that a

breach of it, or a vaulting over those laws that hedge in the power and ambition of monarchs, would be a fatal blow and injury to the primary and fundamental laws on which the government was founded. And this leads us to observe, that a king abusing his trust in such a manner as to destroy public liberty or religion, may be justly deposed, and the crown given to another. When once he disregards those solemn attestations made on ascending the throne, wisely decreed for the security and happiness of all ; when once he defies the laws that regulate and limit his powers and prerogatives (to be employed for the good of all), and, as it were, assumes the legislative as well as executive power, he becomes amenable to the laws, and must suffer what penalties they bear. That the laws of a country should yield to the licentious will of one man, is an anomaly in a free constitution. But in the deposition of a monarch, or in any more extreme case, though violence may be done to the man, the supreme power does not necessarily cease to exist. It remains with the people ; it reverts to them, as the original bestowers ; or is again deposited with other constituted authorities. To destroy the man who wears the crown is, therefore, not the same thing as to tear the crown in pieces. The former act (one happily of seldom occurrence) causes a revolution ; the latter implies the loss of the supreme power, and consequent destruction of all government.

5. Not to speak ill of princes is, we have said, to tie up the tongue of truth. To believe vice in a man can be virtue, or any thing less than vice, in a prince, is a violation of every principle of morality and religion. Nor is there, that we know of, any law in heaven, or on earth, which requires us to respect a monarch, as a man, whose



vices and wickedness would be detested and condemned in a private individual. Yet though we may justly condemn the man, we are bound to respect his office, and his person, as the representative of that office ; and this we may do without the least hypocrisy or jesuitism in the mind. In truth, if this be wrong, we are guilty every day of similar acts as regards men in lower stations ; for while we feel due respect for a man on account of the high office he occupies, we rarely inquire whether his private life and conduct are worthy of esteem or not. How different is the case with a priest of religion, or a teacher of morals ? We expect not only their public, but private life, shall in all points correspond and harmonize with the doctrines they teach, or the rules of life they inculcate. To fulfil their mission effectually, religion and morality must grace and beautify all their actions ; but in an office of a merely civil nature we are not so scrupulous, and generally are satisfied if the man is qualified to perform the duties faithfully and efficiently, without too minutely examining his private life.

6. A parallel has been sometimes drawn between a monarch and the head of a family, as if both were by divine ordination, or had a divine right to fill the offices and fulfil their duties ; but there is this very marked and obvious difference, in at least one respect, that the power of the father becomes extinct at his death, and cannot be resumed by any other, whereas the supreme power lodged in the monarch survives after his death, passing down through all generations so long as it remains undestroyed. It may go from one family to another, or from one branch to another branch ; it may be usurped by an oligarchy, or

may fall into the hands of a wild and furious democracy, and yet it exists amid all these changes, and must ever be there where a government is, of whatever form or denomination.

7. The imaginative mind, proposing to itself an entire dissolution of the supreme power, may ask, what becomes of this power when the crown is torn in pieces? Does it escape from the political body, as the soul escapes from the body of man at death? Is it a spiritual or material being? *Ens* or *non-ens*—really something, or nothing? Rent into fragments, by the violence and madness of men, does it revert to the beings that gave it, as the ancients supposed the soul of man did, to the Soul of the world: the emanations returning from whence they came, to the bosom of the one, undivided? These fragments flying about the distracted country, where the elements of discord are raging, and where every man is his own king, are they absorbed by the tumultuous anarchical spirits? Does every such spirit feel strengthened by this accession of new vigour and power? Can these *disjecta membra* of power be collected again, and so, by a wise architect, put all together again, as before, making one undivided unity? The history of the world can answer all these questions.

8. What is power? What is this supreme power of a state? It appears to us, without any profound analysis of its constituent elements, to be the mere sovereignty of the law. It is clearly not the law itself, but something beyond and above it, and yet amenable to it. The most important element of this power is the executive authority, or the power to compel respect and obedience to the laws, and to punish any breach or transgression of them.

Whenever it becomes incompetent to perform these functions, it is a vain and a useless thing ; a shadow without a substance, or, in a word, no power at all.

As laws are made for the protection of property and security of life, it is every man's interest to maintain their supremacy, and to see the wrong-doer punished. And as the supreme power of the state is given to one person, for the well-being of the country, for the consolidation of its internal and external authority ; it is manifestly the duty and interest of every one, under it, to preserve it within the landmarks assigned to it, that it may not encroach on the province of public liberty. The preservation of liberty is even more important, finally, than the loss of life, or of property ; as it implies the privation of both, as well as many other evils. Wise and prudent is it, therefore, to define clearly the conditions upon which this power shall be exercised ; to make the monarch himself assent to certain laws, considered fundamental and constitutional, in all free countries, that shall confine this power within certain bounds, and guarantee to his subjects every freedom compatible with the general welfare of the state.

9. The legislative and executive authorities must always be essentially distinct and separate. In those countries where the will of the monarch is the sole law, where he invests himself with the legislative as well as the executive functions, we have instances of the fatal danger in blending them together. The liberties of the people, in such cases, depend entirely on the temper or disposition of the ruling power ; they may be extended, they may be lessened or totally destroyed ; the people may be freemen or slaves, as they are fortunate or unfortunate in their king.

In free governments, though evils may arise of the same character, from the supreme power being exercised more or less injuriously, it is not possible the evil can ever become so great as permanently to injure public liberty. It may be asked, How can one man possess such a power as no free state can possess? Because, in despotic governments, the executive power is strong enough to usurp the legislative; that is to say, the king or monarch can punish without the form of trial; his will being the sole law, is obeyed implicitly, or if not obeyed, is promptly punished; so that no form, or scarcely any lapse of time, intervenes between the act of the will and the punishment. No law inspires so much personal fear, as when the penalty treads closely on the transgression. This is the policy of despotic monarchs; and hence their acts partake more of vengeance than of justice.

10. The personal character of a despotic or arbitrary monarch, sometimes has as much physical weight as the power of a free monarchy, and often more; but it never can have equal moral influence. The tendency of despotism is to slavery, and slavery tears up root and branch every noble element in human nature; whereas freedom and qualified liberty encourage moral rectitude; independence of character and of thought, increase of knowledge in all branches, and general improvement in every thing. Under the grievous burden of despotism the soul is depressed in all its aspirations, and repressed in all its energies; under a free monarchy, in which dwells an ardent spirit of liberty, the mind of man expands till (in comparison with the savage) he becomes a demigod. Science and literature are the great regenerators of mankind; but where these two noble branches of knowledge can only be pur-

sued according to the will of a king, or tyrant, man, instead of eagerly searching for what is true, or freely expressing what is grand and worthy in either, will often accommodate his opinions and discoveries to the taste or arbitrary will of the ruling power. Thus when Plato was called to Syracuse by the Tyrant, he soon retraced his steps, because his fanciful opinions of a republic could find no favour in the mind of one who ruled despotically, and detested the very name of liberty.

11. It will be clear, then, after what has been said, that it must be a great crime to tear the crown in pieces, or destroy the supreme power,—the foundation of all government. From such an act every possible evil must follow, that we can conceive incidental to the subversion of a state,—the destruction of property, the insecurity of life, one party pitched against another, civil broils and contentions numberless, and, in the end, a tyranny far worse than any evil we can imagine under an abuse of the supreme power.

The power wisely centred in one, or a few, will become dissipated, or divided into an infinite number of fragments; and each ambitious spirit will imagine himself qualified to wield the supreme power; so that for an abuse of power, we may have not only one tyranny but many, till such time as the elements of discord and anarchy have boiled up and burst, throwing the power into a government of pure physical force.

## ON LIBERTY, &amp;c.

~~~~~  
Symbol XV.—*Angustum annulum ne gestato.*
Wear not a strait ring.
 ~~~~~

1. THINGS most common and vulgar become types or emblems of authority, of power, of greatness. Other things, on the contrary, once marks of eminence or power, have degenerated into common and vulgar use. Thus rings were originally badges of authority, and formed a part of the investiture of office. Pharaoh gave to Joseph his ring, or signet, in committing to him the government of Egypt; and so did Ahasuerus to Mordecai; not to mention other instances to be found in the Sacred Scriptures. But afterwards they were commonly used, as at this day, for adorning the person. Of the manner of wearing them, it is said by Sir Thomas Browne, in his *Vulgar Errors*, that "it is observed by Pliny, that, in the portraits of their gods, rings were worn on the finger next the thumb; that the Romans also wore them on the little finger, as Nero is described in Petronius; some wore them on the middle finger, as the ancient Gauls and Britons; and some upon the fore-finger, as is deducible from Julius Pollux, who names that ring *Corianos*."

The fourth finger of the left hand, on which is worn the *vinculum matrimonii*, was at one time believed by some learned men to contain a sensitive nerve or vein which communicated with the heart, the supposed seat of affection. This ring matrimonial is an undoubted badge of obedience, or rather symbolic token of the loss of liberty, as well as an external witness of an implied contract. The custom of wearing such rings is of great antiquity, as we are informed by the same author; for, says he, it was not only a Christian practice, but was observed by heathens, as Alexander ab Alexandro, Gellius, Macrobius, and Pierius, have delivered; as Levinus Lemnius hath confirmed, who assures us this vessel (of the finger) to be an artery, and not a nerve, as antiquity hath conceived it: adding, moreover, that in apothymies and swoonings, he used the frication of this finger with saffron and gold; that the ancient physicians mixed up their medicines herewith; that this is seldom or last of all affected with the gout; and when that becometh nodous, men continue not long after. It has also this peculiarity, that it cannot be extended by itself, but must be accompanied by one finger on either side. To this opinion assenteth Alexander ab Alexandro in these words,—“*Annulum nuptialem prior ætas in sinistrâ ferebat, crediderim ne affereretur.*”

Rings were commonly used also by learned doctors, as charms and talismans; and, for such useful and rational purposes, they are recommended by Hippocrates and Galen. They were also put upon slaves, and it is to such rings of servitude Pythagoras refers in the symbol. Pliny says they were formed of iron, and were always borne till the period of manumission. The same custom prevailed in eastern countries.

2. There is no possession we should prize more highly than liberty ; for there is nothing more detestable than slavery. One is the greatest blessing, the other the greatest curse that can befall us. There cannot be found in all antiquity a nation so jealous of their liberty as the Greeks. Freedom to them was as necessary as the very air they breathed. We cannot find anywhere in all history equivalent examples of love of liberty, and love of country ; not the sentiment or feeling, as in barbarous nations, but steady and undying principle was the foundation of these virtues. Of all punishments that the supreme power could inflict, banishment from Greece, the land of freedom and learning, and civilization, was esteemed the most intolerable—worse far than death itself. No lover torn from his mistress could suffer more than a Greek banished from his country ; no foreign clime ; no richer land ; no brighter climate ; no, not all the friendship and hospitality of other people, could reconcile him to the change, and make him forget the land of his birth. Greece, Greece ! was ever the theme of his thoughts ; his dreams ; his meditations ; nothing could obliterate her fair image from his heart ; no blandishments make him forget his first love. If suicide did not end all his woes and griefs, he would at least pine away and languish, and die in wretchedness and despair.

3. That the Greeks often abused the liberty they so much cherished—gained after long and persevering struggles, and at the expense of oceans of blood—cannot be denied ; but an impartial judge will perceive, after a full examination of their popular and democratic form of government, and of the versatile character of their genius, that the abuse of liberty in most cases arose from extreme jealousy. For example, in the banishment of their most



illustrious men, what principle guided them? Jealousy of their personal popularity, which sometimes reached such a height, that they trembled at the prospect of the supreme power being taken from the people, and placed in the hands of one who might tyrannize over them. The personal qualities of an individual give him greater popularity, and consequent power, under a democracy, than under almost any other form of government; and it was at that juncture, when the applause and support of the common people was at the climax, and when there arose the dread of personal influence being carried to dangerous excess, that they removed the object of jealousy from the scene of action by exile; thus changing, in a manner, the current of events, rushing on too rapidly, and averting the affections of the commonalty to some other objects. The high sense of public duty might call upon a man to sacrifice a friend or relation for the well-being of his country; and to ostracize him whom he personally loved and revered. The manner in which those great men, hallowed in the page of history, and whose names are on every tongue, were recalled from exile, proves that it was policy, and not any deep-rooted dislike, which caused them to be removed for a season.

4. Perfect liberty (if it can exist at all, in any state of society) is not to be found under any form of government. Liberty is a comparative, and not a positive, thing, in all civilized countries. As Prometheus, who stole fire from heaven, was bound by Jupiter, that the world might be saved from conflagration; so liberty must be fettered, under all good governments, lest it should degenerate into licence and anarchy. The privilege enjoyed in commonwealths, is more properly called freedom than liberty—namely, free-

dom to act only in such a manner, and to such an extent, as is compatible with the general well-being of the state. For in taking our place under any government, or being born under any government, we abandon a portion of the liberty we are supposed to possess *de natura*, in return for protection and security of life and property; and by a tacit compact, we agree to obey the laws, made for the good of all, and to abandon a portion of our liberty, in exchange for the benefits and advantages secured to us by those laws. If every individual has a voice in forming those laws, either personally, or through another, the laws are then considered as much his act, as if he had formed and enacted them himself; and it becomes his interest, as an individual possessing property, or as a member of the great community, enjoying certain rites and immunities, to have the laws strictly obeyed. Peace, protection, and security, are more than an equivalent for the portion of liberty surrendered.

5. Pythagoras, surveying the world around him with a feeling of philanthropy, and a deep abiding love of freedom, beheld the people ground to the earth by tyrants, and petty sovereigns. This caused him to turn his attention to the science of governing mankind,—a science very little known or understood in his day. From thought and observation, he struck out certain state maxims and rules of government, and conceived, by acting upon them, all the intolerable evils which afflicted and debased the people, would be cured. In some cases his policy was attended with beneficial results; and no doubt the blessings conferred by his influence and superior understanding would have been greater and more permanent, had his political panaceas been founded rather on experience than

abstract principles. Probably he fell into the same error as Plato did afterwards, who indulged in the erroneous idea that all governors of states should be philosophers. The government of a state demanding the profoundest knowledge and greatest abilities, he conceived that only philosophers were entitled, by virtue of their acquirements, to hold the reins of government. They alone are capable of settling the true form and design of a commonwealth; they alone have the capacity to suggest comprehensive schemes of policy, and give being to well-defined and equitable laws; they alone have the science to negotiate with foreign countries, and settle the abstrusest of all questions, the laws of nations.

But however noble, however true, however elevated be the principles wrought out by profound meditation, after all, mankind can only effectually be governed by events and circumstances; and in many cases, theoretical or abstract principles are not only impracticable—because inapplicable and ill-timed—but the pursuits, the mode of life, and other peculiarities of the contemplative and philosophic life, deprive such men of that most essential branch of knowledge in the government of mankind,—knowledge of human nature in all its phases and varieties. It is the province of philosophers, therefore, to lay down principles on which men ought to be governed, and not to become the agents to carry out those principles in practice. Their office is to influence opinion by their writings, and not to change the face of society by acting upon them; to be the guides and forerunners of improvement; the silent monitors and advisers, but not the political agents or agitators. For this they want experience and qualification; and, in coming into contact with men, they may lose all the influ-

ence they have gained, and the respect for their opinions which they have acquired, in the more quiet and consistent sphere.

6. The philosopher who spins out his theory in the closet, and, by long meditation and study, discovers the true principles of government, often disregards times and seasons, fitness and unfitness, and considers not that however true be his maxims or principles, mankind, or the state of society, may not admit of their application. His principles may, again, be judiciously applied to one country when they would fail if applied to another under a different state; but the philosopher, in zeal and ardour for his theory being carried into practice, overlooks those obstacles which the eye of practical knowledge and experience instantly detects. Hence their abstract principles, their theories, however true and excellent, have often been despised, or, at least, rejected in one age and received by another. For human nature is not to be governed on philosophic principles. The variety of character among mankind of different countries, the variable nature of society in each nation, the habits and ancient customs of the people, the strength of prejudice, the dislike of change, the veneration for the fundamental laws, and many other powerful considerations, interfere and paralyse the objects of the political philosopher. Whatever change takes place in government appears to be brought about by a kind of necessity from without, and not from any prejudged idea of what are the best principles applicable to civil government. The philosopher may discover the principles adopted in one age conformable to those advocated by the theorist in a former one, because society has become fit to receive them, and because what is abstractly true has its

tardy but certain influence on public opinion. Governments, therefore, are, and must always be, of a practical and not of a theoretical nature, gradually adapting themselves to the wants, wishes, and civilization of the people. Thus they are brought to maturity by slow degrees; by slow degrees are men brought to act upon principles taught by political writers hundreds of years before. The government and state of society will generally be found, on this account, to possess a mutual adaptation to each other; and it is only under a high degree of refinement and civilization that liberty can exist in perfection, or the true principles of government can be carried out. But even in this superior state of society we still discover the same dislike to change, and the same repugnance to the adoption of some abstract principles which are allowed to be true, but are rejected as impracticable under prevailing circumstances. The science of governing mankind is, therefore, a science, if it be so called, founded entirely on experience, in which all abstract notions and dogmatic systems have generally very little weight, though many advocates and professors.

7. What a blessing is liberty! They who enjoy its advantages can hardly appreciate the value of it. What evil can be found more intolerable than for a freeman to be compelled to wear the galling and debasing bonds of servitude! Who more pitiable than the wretched being who would become a willing slave, and prefer the *strait ring* of bondage to the freedom and independence loved by noble minds! What greater sign of degradation and corruption than for a whole nation to yield up its liberty, and prefer personal ease, or voluptuous pleasures, to the freedom of their country! Yet, says Milton,—

“ What more oft, in nations grown corrupt,  
And by their vices brought to servitude,  
Than to love bondage more than liberty.”

A love of liberty is the characteristic of great and noble minds ; as indifference to it is the sure mark of infamy. The poet enthusiastically exclaims,—

“ Oh ! give me liberty ;  
For, were ev'n paradise my prison,  
Still I should long to leap the crystal walls.”

Under its influence the soul expands to great deeds. It is the foundation of all heroic actions. It has been dearly bought by most nations who enjoy its blessings ; and such alone can fully value the inestimable treasure. Like virtue, it is exposed to all kinds of temptations, and must, therefore, be watched with jealousy. In all nations there are hirelings ready to sell the liberty of their country, for some low motive of personal aggrandisement or self-interest ; others there are watching opportunities to stab her in the dark, or to undermine her virtue.

May this blessing ever be ours ! As a nation may we ever be pre-eminent, as the Grecians of old were, for liberty and patriotism ! May we not be satisfied till we break the bonds of slavery throughout all the world, and restore every man to his just prerogative. Without this love of freedom, as a principle, as a virtue of the highest excellence, we shall inevitably sink as a nation ; and every virtue which makes us great, and noble, and celebrated among men, shall pass from us.

“ Oh liberty, thou goddess heavenly bright,  
Profuse of bliss, and pregnant with delight !  
Eternal pleasures in thy presence reign,  
And smiling plenty loads thy wanton train ;

Eas'd of her load, subjection grows more light,  
And poverty looks cheerful in thy sight :  
Thou mak'st the gloomy face of nature gay ;  
Giv'st beauty to the sun, and pleasure to the day."

8. Yet the slavery of the body is a small thing in comparison with the slavery of the mind. Men make slaves of each other ; but some, who are called free, are slaves to their bodies, and are in a more pitiable state ; others are in the bonds of abject and galling servitude to vice and vicious habits. The "lusts of the flesh" eat into the soul more dreadfully than the iron chains of slavery eat into the bodies of slaves. Even in the loss of personal liberty, we may still be free. Our enemies may incarcerate our bodies, but they have no power over the immortal and reflecting being. From the gloomy prison, from exile, the voices of the great have spoken in the language of truth and eloquence. In bondage, men have, in their undying works, proved the perfect freedom of the soul. To the prisoner, lonely in his cell, the victim of malice, or martyr of virtue, we are indebted for works that shall live for ever in the memory of man. So long as we are innocent, we may be said to be free ; but under the dominion of sin and passion, we are more to be pitied than the veriest slave. We have sold ourselves for a transient pleasure ; and lost our freedom in the indulgence of some favourite vice. In such a state, how can we hope to participate in the freedom of the sons of God ?

## ON PUBLIC OPINION, &amp;c.

~~~~~

Symbol XVII.—*Prægredienti gregi ð via cedendum.*
Give way to the flock passing by.

~~~~~

1. THOSE who have, with ordinary attention, observed the peculiarities of the Pythagorean system, as already evolved in these essays, will see the propriety and force of this injunction. The disciples of that distinguished school courted solitude, and practised silence; in which alone wisdom is to be found. Their lives were spent in meditation and tranquil pursuits; and they carefully shunned crowds and assemblies of the people, where they found nothing save quarrels, noise, and confusion. With some truth they esteemed mankind in a body, as irrational and stupid as a flock of sheep. They had the most sovereign contempt for public opinion. In a multitude of counselors they could find no wisdom. Experience had taught them the hollowness and capriciousness of men as citizens of the state, whose opinions were as versatile and unstable as the wind; opinions not founded on calm, deliberate judgment, but taken from the uncertain lips of a leader, or a demagogue.

2. To oppose or refute by argument the actions or opinions of a flock of men, who are hurrying on like a turbu-



lent river, and with more physical than moral force, were, in their estimation, as hopeless a task as to teach wisdom to a flock of sheep or swine. It were a task surpassing all the labours of Hercules. It were irrational, because impossible. When the torrent cannot be stemmed, or diverted from its channel, we must succumb, and let it pass by. This is the truest wisdom.

3. The multitude often have opinions on which they act, and certain principles to carry out; to effect which, union and concert are necessary. But no law can compel us to accede to those opinions, or to sanction those principles; while wisdom and experience may have taught us the fallaciousness of them both. In such a case, let us hold our own opinions in peace, and refrain from opposing a power which no single hand can safely or usefully encounter.

4. The flock, beginning with professions of virtue, at length end in vice. We must not, therefore, follow the multitude to do evil. The world is at enmity with God. We must, then, shun the world, and give way to the flock passing by. If we make a friend of the world, virtue shall lose her hold on us; if we mix with its vices, its hypocrisy, its passions, wisdom will surely leave us, and truth take wing and flee away.

5. In this, as in other respects, the Pythagorean school assimilates nearer to the Christian system than any other. They disdained, like other schools, to rush into the world for supporters or applause; they sought not disciples in the world, but seduced them from it by the allurements of wisdom and virtue. Their doctrines and practice were too pure and refined ever to be popular; their customs and laws such as could never be adopted by men, as a

community ; and, therefore, they were too wise to thrust them in where they might die and corrupt, but not flourish.

So the Christian is called upon to leave the world ; to practise the same self-denial, the same retiring virtues, the same abstinence from pleasure, the same quiet exclusiveness. He must not think as the world thinks, but reflect and believe for himself alone ; for the world shall not teach wisdom, nor shall the professions of men aid his salvation.

6. If we cannot agree with the multitude in those opinions and actions that are opposed to the welfare of the community, there may be other cases in which acquiescence is both wise and prudent. If the multitude be wicked, and call virtue vice, and vice virtue, or pretend that private vices are public benefits, we must rest steady in our own opinions ; if we find them promoting without disguise, general anarchy, sedition, and those principles that will ultimately end in misery, and ruin to all, we are still bound to remain unshaken to our opinions, as lovers of our country, and supporters of general order ; but if, in other minor cases, they should be equally eager to attain their ends, we may sometimes prudently yield, even if we differ from them. The public voice may sometimes be respected.

7. We would not carry the Pythagorean system to that extent which would preclude men from taking an interest in public affairs, or in promulgating their opinions, for the benefit and instruction of mankind. The opinions and thoughts of a wise man are a treasure ; but they must be given without any of that arrogance and presumption, which are the characteristics of many writers, who aspire to new doctrines and new discoveries in affairs of politics and economy. Nor must their opinions, though really

sound and good, be thrust upon an age which is not ripe or willing to receive them. "An unseasonable motion is but beating the air," says Bacon. Their opinions may be in advance of the age (no uncommon circumstance in deep thinkers); if so, they will be wise to wait the tide of events; watch the opportunities as they arise; and mark those changes of circumstance, and the perplexity of the public mind, which may make new opinions more acceptable, and at once stamp their authority. Many doctrines which are now generally received were rejected when first promulgated; some of them were left to float down the stream of time, like Chinese offspring, with a careless paternity; till at length they were caught up, in future ages, by analogous minds, by whom they were restored to vitality, and in due time claimed their right to overrule the world. An original thinker is often neglected by his own times; the cobwebs of oblivion form around his works; but the time shall surely come when he will assume his just authority and power. About such men there is a kind of magnanimity, which makes them indifferent to present celebrity; but there is, at the same time, a confidence in their own talents, and a sure hope of immortality. They are haughty and proud, and condescend not to court the applause of men, or to thrust their notions on an unwilling world. It is the weak, the vain, the shallow men, who, swollen with the importance of their new-fangled ideas, force them *no-lens volens* on the public, and never rest till they form what they consider a nucleus of glory around their names; mistaking notoriety for fame, the noisy applause of their own small party for the solid and mature award of posterity.

8. We may further observe, in this place, that political

changes, whose propriety is obviously apparent when the novelty is past, are often demanded long before they are carried out. The clear minds of some, the far-seeing eye of others, can pierce the veil of corruption which has obscured the perfection of the original institution, and often truly predict a restoration when the public mind shall have become as enlightened as their own. Many enforce their opinions, but the wise man will only record them for the benefit of his country; he will not become the agitator, when he knows the public mind is not yet ripe to receive them. Great political changes, though ostensibly suggested by a few, can only be carried out by the moral force of the nation; they must interest the whole public, be discussed and deeply considered, before a force is obtained adequate to the emergency. But it may be said, if the public mind demands the change, who is there to oppose? What obstacle lies in its path? The prejudices of the few, who are, from station, from influence, or from wealth, the opponents of all change, and the direct influence of bodies who fatten, as they have already fattened, on the corruptions and abuses of the state; the fears of others, who only see in changes of any kind the beginning of a revolution; the bigotry of others, who are wedded to an abuse, because it is sanctified, as it were, by ancient usage, as if the sins of old age were less heinous than the sins of youth; and others, who are insensible to corruption, because they have been engendered and reared in corruption.

9. The multitude, or the great body of the people, who extort such changes by the force of public opinion, are often—are, indeed, always—distrusted by the few who oppose them. And what is worth observing, they are

generally charged with those very motives which actuate the few, in their opposition—self interest: their direct purpose is a revolution; their secret design a public robbery; their desire is to subvert the order of things as constituted, that they may in turn become the rulers; the wealth and power of the few are the motives which lead them on; their transfer the only thing that will satisfy them. Such is but a brief category of the crimes the multitude have been charged with whenever they have spoken with a determined voice. But in this the few judge others by themselves—a very common error.

10. The multitude may be giddy and capricious; but we sincerely believe them to be far more honest than their rulers. Their errors are mostly errors of judgment, and not of disposition. We may say of them what Blackstone says of public assemblies—"They are frequently foolish in their contrivance, and weak in their execution; but generally mean to do the thing that is right and just, and have always a degree of patriotism and public spirit." The misfortune is, they have been charged with the crimes and delinquencies of their leaders, who are chosen out of a higher class than themselves. These leaders are seldom the original proposers of the changes they demand; they only at second hand borrow them from the few wise men who silently advocated them in their closets; and as the public mind ripens to receive the new doctrines, they assume the lead. Thus it happens that, for interested motives, for vanity or ambition, they may adopt opinions which in private they have condemned. Thus is it they have often betrayed the trust reposed in them; thus it is that the followers have received all the obloquy due alone to the treacherous leader.

11. The many have no interests separate from those of the country ; their interests depend on the general happiness, the universal prosperity, of all classes. Not so with the few ; their private interests are often opposed to the interest of the state, and to their public duties. The welfare of the community results from the products of industry, to secure which peace and employment must exist. But the few have already, from possession, those very elements which constitute public prosperity—wealth ; Fortune has given them that which other men labour for by the sweat of their brow—the means of subsistence ; that, whose acquisition acts as a bond to society, and a guarantee of public order, and general tranquillity. It is clear, therefore, that, in relation to the state, the few hold a different position from the many. It may, indeed, be asserted, that they also have an interest in public order—a much greater and more direct interest, as their wealth is chiefly in the soil. This is true ; but it does not, nevertheless, make their interests analogous. The value of their property may be increased by detriment to the country ; the laws they enact may directly benefit them while they injure all others ; in the abuse of power they may perpetrate evils through generations yet unborn ; they may exhaust the public treasury by corruption or extravagance ; in a word, they have the power, and history proves they have had the will too, to afflict their country with misfortunes that the multitude could never have perpetrated. The few are always full of dread at the idea of rebellion ; full of apprehension at any usurpation of power by the people ; whereas rebellion is but a casual irruption on the body corporate ; the abuse of power by the few, a chronic, hereditary disease.

12. In concluding these remarks (which to some may seem to savour too much of democracy, but which are really founded on the experience of history), we may observe, that the great evils the many have had at all times to contend against are want of unity of purpose, want of sound knowledge, and the insincerity of their leaders. The lower classes have, from these causes (which better education may cure or mitigate) been made the passive instruments of ambitious men who, under the garb of patriotism, were secretly promoting their own selfish designs. With intentions pure and a patriotism undoubted, they have been led on to deeds of infamy and disgrace ; with a strong desire of public happiness, they have, from ignorance and the hypocrisy of their leaders, been induced to stab the very cause they upheld ; and in the general censure they have had poured upon them all the hatred and slander more justly merited by their leaders. Those cases in history are eagerly held up by the few as beacons to warn men against the danger of democracy—how unjustly may be seen.

ON OPPRESSION OF THE POOR; ON TAXATION;  
ON THE WELFARE OF THE PEOPLE, &c.

~~~~~  
Symbol LVII.—*Sudorem ferro abstergere tetrum nefas.*

It is a dreadful crime to wipe off the sweat with a sword.
~~~~~

1. THE source of all wealth is in the labour of man. The value of property is also dependent on labour. If there was no man to till the ground land would be worthless; if our wants and necessities were not supplied by labour, we might perish among heaps of gold. The property accumulated by labour and industry is valued more than wealth which descends from man to man; not, perhaps, in the estimation of the world, but by the man who has reaped the sweet reward of his toil. When, therefore, such an one is robbed of all he has gained, though the actual amount be but a single drop in the ocean, he suffers as great an injury as a rich man could suffer; when force and oppression are employed, whether by the thief or by the law, to despoil, then it is a "dreadful crime." It is hence said in the Book of Ecclesiastes (xxxiv. 21), "*He who takes away the bread that is gained by the sweat of the brow, is like him who kills his neighbour.*"

2. To rob the poor is a crime, no one will deny; to rob the poor by cruelty and oppression, is a crime of dread-



ful dye. The law is made to protect and secure the property of the rich (for the rich are the law-makers), and, therefore, it is safe from spoil and aggression; at all events, there is a power to punish and recover; but the poor has not the same defences for his property, and is more open to the inroads of the thief and spoiler. The rich man, if he loses, can rarely lose all; the poor man may, and that in the evening of his life, when necessity and want compel him again to return to the plough after he had hoped for an old age of rest and release from labour.

3. It is not impossible that the symbol was intended to have a more comprehensive application, than the oppression of the poor by his neighbour. Perhaps it alludes also to the tyranny and injustice of states and governments, which, by the sword, exact the earnings of the labourer to support the extravagance of kings and the profligacy of courtiers; perhaps it enunciates the economic doctrine, that as the labourer is the active producing bee of the commonwealth, in justice he should be relieved from taxation.

Whether so or not, it is clear that the rich man, as well as the poor, is taxed. But are they taxed equally? The solution of the question shall demonstrate whether the symbol of Pythagoras can justly be applied.

4. Equality of taxation, it is manifest, can only be determined affirmatively, when the burden is proved to press equally on both. It is superfluous to say, that if taxation be general on all articles of consumption, the burden must fall with an equal pressure. The universality of taxation is nothing in the question. The equality of taxation can only be proved by taking the incomes of the rich man and the poor man, and comparing the relative amount of taxation falling on each. This is the apparent equality;

for the real equality we must search deeper; we must consider the relative ability to bear the burden. There are rich men, from whom if one half of their incomes were taken away, who would still command every necessity, and still many luxuries of life; but if we were to deprive the labourer of one half of his wages, we should reduce him to comparative poverty; not only would he lose all ordinary comforts, but it would be a struggle to keep alive the flickering spark of vitality. The same principle obtains in taxation; though the labourer pays the same tax on any article of consumption as the rich, he pays more in relation to his income; it is, therefore, a greater burden to him. If the rich man spent the whole of his income on the necessities of life, then there would be a nearer approach to equality.

5. The revenue of a country is derived chiefly from taxes on articles of consumption. If we could compare the amount contributed by the many poor and the few rich, we should see who were the main props of the revenue. If we find, as an example of inequality of taxation, the labourer spends three-fourths of his wages on bread alone, or even one-fourth, he surely must suffer a heavier degree of taxation on this article than the rich man, who consumes little proportionate to his income.

6. The interests of the people are now happily attracting the attention of our legislators. In most countries, as all history proves, they have been neglected or despised. We have many histories of the kingdoms of the world; of the rise and fall of monarchies; of wars; of the intrigues and crimes of rulers; but we have no history of the people of those respective countries. It is only now that they possess power, and speak with a loud voice that commands attention. If the welfare of states be now sacrificed, the

fault will be in the people more than in their rulers ; in this respect the picture of human life is reversed, as contrasted with the era of Pythagoras. The happiness and prosperity of men chiefly depend on themselves, and not on those who govern them. Human nature is the same now as a thousand years ago ; men will abuse power if they can ; they will sacrifice the interests of their country to their ambition or their passions if not restrained by the voice of the people.

7. The government of states has become infinitely more important and interesting, than in any period of history ; because more elements now enter into it than the mere questions of revenue ; of waging war, or being at peace ; of political power, and connections with other states : the internal welfare of the people, their industry and prosperity, their improvement by education, as well as in art and ingenuity, are questions now deeply considered. The immense increase of population thunders at our doors for employment—for subsistence—and they will be heard.

It is now obvious, that crime and ignorance go hand in hand. To make good citizens, we must afford education to the people. This is an important concession ; because it is a new doctrine among the most powerful in the state. Philosophers, and a few other far-seeing men, perceived the dangers of ignorance, and the mighty advantages of knowledge ; but by the majority of the people, education, except purely in religion, was scouted as an evil, that tended to scepticism, and to a revolution in the habits of society.

Happily, now, most men agree that education is necessary to make a good Christian, as well as a good citizen. May the time come, and that soon, when the wisdom and humane feelings of men shall secure to the labourer a little

leisure, in this land of incessant industry; of perpetual toil; that he may have some enjoyment in the life God has given him. It is not meet that millions of rational and immortal beings should be made slaves of, for the aggrandizement and enrichment of a few. May the time come, when all will see, that there is a higher purpose in the creation of man, than to be a mere instrument in the hands of others; to toil without cessation; to make every thing subservient to use and industry; to bring all things to the standard of money. With some leisure for improvement, for thought, for religion, for education; nay, even for rational and innocent amusement, men will still be as industrious and as useful as they now are; and will constitute a people we can admire and rejoice in.

In the present state of the labouring classes, there appears to us something awful; their numbers excite awe; but the precarious tenure of their occupation calls up feelings of apprehension. They have been, as it were, forced into being, by an artificial demand for labour, which may cease as quickly. When employment is lessened, thousands become paupers; when fully employed, their life is one of fearful toil, in which there can be little happiness above the mere gratification of sense.

How to make out of this people a peaceable, happy, Christian population, is a question yet unresolved in the womb of time.

## ON JUSTICE AND INJUSTICE.

~~~~~  
Symbol LVIII.—*Jugum ne transillas.*
Pass not over the balance.
 ~~~~~

1. THOSE who are conversant with ancient writings, will sometimes be surprised at the exalted rank given to the virtue, *Justice*. It was held in the highest repute and esteem as a cardinal virtue ; and, moreover, was said to comprehend all other virtues, for which it was fancifully supposed to resemble the diapason, or octave, in musical sounds, that includes and comprehends all other sounds. By some philosophers it was esteemed to be the eternal principle on which the harmony, and even the existence, of the universe depends ; and, therefore, the most glorious attribute in the Divine Nature, who created, and who sustains, the universe. Divine in its origin, and perfect in its nature, it descended upon earth, where it is no less necessary, in the affairs of men, than in upholding the harmony of the universe. Without justice, all things human would fall into anarchy and confusion ; without justice, there could be no security for life or property ; and no happiness ; because, as Plato remarks in the *Republic*, this virtue is the principal cause of happiness to states, as well as to individuals.

2. Justice has been thus defined,—*Justitiæ partes sunt non violare homines*,—"justice consists in doing no injury to man;" but it is clear, a better, because more comprehensive, definition must be found before it can be entitled to maintain the rank to which it was elevated by the ancients. This definition we shall leave to more exact and systematic moralists, as we shall have done all that can be required, if we succeed in showing in what manner justice does include all other virtues; and in proving, therefore, its title to the rank of the *supreme*.

Any discussion or description of the attribute of justice in God, we shall purposely omit; because, first, it is a subject beyond our reach; and, secondly, because the occasion is not a fit one to introduce it here.

3. Justice on earth, where it is but the reflex of the divine attribute, may be divided into three great branches, in which are necessarily included every variety and aspect justice assumes among men. 1. Justice to men. 2. Justice to ourselves. 3. Justice to God. Under these three heads, if we search, we shall find every other virtue which can be required of us as members of the community, as moral agents, and as religious, responsible beings.

4. In *justice to men*, we have that golden rule, "Do to others as ye would they should do unto you," which, if we practise, no man can accuse us of being unjust; and if we fail in some particulars, from want of judgment, or want of knowledge, conscience will acquit us, if we aimed to do what was right; for the desire to act justly by all men, is, as regards the individual, to be just. But as justice is a simple virtue, in which there are no degrees or shades; whose face is always the same; which is immutable as truth; we can rarely be deceived: it is in the acts of in-

justice that we are liable to doubt and deception, because, in our discrimination, we may err in judging unjust acts to be just, as we often err in any thing in which degrees of good or evil enter as a necessary adjunct.

The Goddess of Justice is represented weighing nicely in her golden scales the deeds of men against her own intuitive sense of justice, in which a doubt of the result is obviously admitted; but in acts purely just, no such test is wanted, there being no degrees or variety, but one simple uniform principle. This uncertainty, and need of judgment, represented in the fanciful and poetical image of the Goddess of Justice, extends through all the actions of men; and though we do not strictly judge as she judges, with impartiality and infallibility, our minds pass through somewhat the same process. The sense of justice is our guide, test, and standard, by which we judge the actions of men; but that sense of justice (unlike the abstract idea), is not unerring, nor immutable; it undergoes changes, and is more or less obtuse and corrupt, according to the cultivation of the mind, and the state of society we live in. Thus barbarous nations have exemplified a total blindness to the sense of justice in mutual robberies and wars for mere plunder; nations more civilized are less open in their depredations, but the injustice is alike; the powerful assume might to be right, and rob the weak; not always by force or by aggression, but with the same injustice; while some nations, with the sense totally perverted, have actually justified the robbery of other people of a different country, and different faith; as if religion could ever countenance a deviation from the principle of justice. Most of the wars of mankind have been carried on in defiance of all justice, because the aggressor or spoiler, or whatever

title we please to give him, never considers war in a moral point of view; or, if he does, he subjects justice to the plea of conquest, or crushes it under the chariot of ambition. The sense of justice is often lost in the conduct of nations; in war it becomes faint in individuals, who have their passions aroused; and in the time of peace, we find the same insensibility among men; whether trafficking with each other, or simply associating with each other.

5. Those gross cases of injustice of daily occurrence, as defrauding, cheating, and over-reaching one another, in the ordinary affairs of life, are too obvious to dwell upon. The abstraction of another's property, by unjust means, is a definitive act; it is taken from one and is transferred to another—the value of which can be estimated, and, when detected, the robber is punished. There the act terminates. The evil is in proportion to the loss, valued in money, and no more. But of how many other acts of injustice may a man be guilty, and is guilty, where property is not concerned; which cannot be estimated by the above standard! acts that entail a far greater loss, and far more misery.

Who does not remember that well-known passage in Shakspeare, where the vile dross of the purse is finely contrasted with the real intrinsic value of character and reputation! The loss of the purse is nothing; the loss of character every thing to a good man. The one is an act of material, the other of spiritual injustice; that hydra-headed monster which leaves misery and desolation in its track. He who steals gold may be forgiven, but we cannot pardon the base slanderer, or the vile traducer. Justice overtakes the poor, naked, trembling thief, and he is punished; for one single act of dishonesty he may forfeit liberty and happiness, though hunger and despair may



have impelled him to it, so sacred is property in the eye of the law. But the defamer and slanderer, the cold-blooded traducer, and maligner of character, who emits his subtle poison, and destroys happiness wherever he comes, often escapes punishment, though his wickedness, and the consequences of his wickedness, be tenfold deeper than that of the thief or robber. Material injustice—fraud or dishonesty—is a thing so palpable, that when detected the penalty is sure to follow ; but of spiritual injustice, which assumes such a variety of forms and shapes, it is sometimes so secret in its operation, that we may suffer the sting of it, and be poisoned, when we cannot discover the evil-doer.

This feature of injustice is also visible ; that while property is protected by the power of the law, and the aggressor punished, men may be guilty, and are guilty, of acts which entail more lasting misery, but which escape punishment altogether, at least in this world. The poor and weak, too, are caught in the meshes of the law, while the rich and powerful break through them. This is a crying injustice—a manifest evil, because justice is prostituted to the convenience of men ; she is made to bow to titles and rank, and bend to the calls of favouritism, or stoop to partial favours, who is by nature inexorable in her decrees, and above all external influences. Among men the bandage is torn from her eyes, and her golden scales are taken away ; and deprived thus of her symbols, we find her become the associate of corruption, the partial witness, the venal judge. She will still overtake the trembling thief, and extend no mercy to the weak or poor ; but she has learned in the school of man to palliate the crimes of the great, and be partial in her favours to wealth,

station, and titles. It is no new thing to make justice subservient to our schemes, and the protector of crime ; it is no new thing to make the magnitude of the prize justify our evil deeds ; no new thing to make the goddess the feigned participator in our passions and criminal devices. In this respect human nature is alike in all ages. The same immunity to the great is recorded in the pages of Euripides, and other painters of manners—the same indulgence shewn to rank and power—the same perverted sense of justice, when the object to be obtained seems great enough to palliate injustice. Thus we find Eteacles, in wresting from his brother the sovereignty of Thebes, who was to share it with him every year, using the same sophism that all men would use who care not for justice, when passion, ambition, or the love of riches is to be gratified.

“ If wrong must be, when empire is the prize,  
The noble cause gives glory to the wrong :  
In all besides let justice hold her course.”

In which there is a most convenient code of morality that agreeably accommodates itself to all circumstances, and as much bad argument as any warrior or conqueror could desire in justification of his cruelty and ambition. In the world we have not the candour of the king, but nevertheless his argument is powerful, and his reasoning just that which men in pursuit of any crime, or in the gratification of any bad passion, apply to their own conduct.

6. To be just to men, we must in all cases act by the golden rule—a rule so simple as never to deceive us. The rule is consciously inscribed on the heart of every man in plain, legible letters, and happily requires no argument or reasoning to develope it. If we act according to this rule,

we shall always behold justice in her true character ; a severe, simple, uniform virtue ; whose lustre and purity can never be tarnished, in whatever situation we be placed, or whatever changes our fortune may undergo. Justice can never alter. That is a maxim never to be forgotten. If circumstances change, and change us, Justice is still the same, though we may often mistake the counterfeits for the true. If we have to seek for justice, or bring her to light by a process of reasoning, we may be sure we shall never find her. In all human actions she is on the surface—she is there to weigh and judge ;—if she is to be sought for, then it must be to hide our own injustice.

7. *Justice to ourselves*, in a comprehensive sense, includes every moral and religious duty. Therefore it is a subject of far more interest and importance than the former. It lies not so near the surface of man's nature ; it penetrates his secret conduct, his inmost thoughts, his latent passions and desires. It concerns his being *in posse* as much as *in esse*. The justice required of him is not in relation to man, tested, condemned, or approved by any outward tribunal ; it is justice to himself alone as a moral agent, an accountable being, God being the final judge. The ignorance of others from whom we conceal our secret depravity is nothing ; our guilt is the same though unseen by any human eye.

8. Justice is a moral virtue, and is therefore amenable to the divine law. As moral laws are in relation to man, to man as a responsible being, it is clear that it is the intention which constitutes the guilt. Human law takes no cognizance of intention ; it punishes a breach of the moral law because it inflicts an injury on society, and can therefore only condemn after the act ; but in the moral

law, as a divine institution, the question takes a far higher ground, and may condemn before the act, as the intention constitutes the guilt.

It will not be denied that a man, having the desire and intention of robbing another, or of committing any crime whatever, and is frustrated in the execution by unforeseen obstacles, is as guilty of a breach of the moral law as if he had succeeded in accomplishing his purpose. The moral law, in its strict sense, has no concern about the consequences, although those enter into the estimation of guilt in the judgment of men. The moral law is the law of which God is the judge, and not man. We may daily break that law, and act unjustly to ourselves, and to God, and yet no bad consequences may follow to society, or to man. In a religious sense, the motives and intentions are in the same relation to the moral law as actions are to the human law. The guilt or evil is actually in the soul of man, and needs no outward expression to prove its existence. Hence Christ, soaring far above the standard man has set up by which to judge the deeds of men, and adumbrating the profound philosophy of morals, declares, to the bewilderment of the material intellect, which sees not beyond the surface of things, that a man may be guilty of the crime of adultery *in his heart*. To what is he guilty, or to whom is he guilty? Not to human judges, who must have evidence of guilt; not to the moral law, as part of the human law, because it can take no notice of crimes existing only in thought or intention; not guilty before any earthly tribunal, but guilty by the law of God, and as that law has been revealed by Christ, guilty to himself.

10. Herein we have the foundation of *spiritual* morality; the sanction of a religious law, which is binding upon every

man. As this law searches the most secret thoughts, and penetrates to the deepest recesses of the heart, we may conceive how many forms and varieties *spiritual* injustice may assume, and in how many ways man may be deluded by a false system of morals. He who esteems himself just so long as he is not detected, is not less foolish than the man who conceives himself innocent in the eye of God, because he has not accomplished his evil design. God judges not as we judge.

11. We may see, then, from this, the true philosophy of morals, how much vigilance—how much self-study, is required in securing a pure soul and blameless life. *Γνῶθὶ σεαυτόν*, *know thyself*, was in ancient times considered the foundation of all necessary wisdom ; it is so still ; as necessary now as ever to be practised with rigid care, and scrupulous fidelity. The knowledge of ourselves is the result of long examination of our nature, our faculties, and passions, without which we cannot hope to avoid those rocks on which the heedless and ignorant make shipwreck of their future happiness. By its light alone we can detect the dangers and delusions by which we are beset ; those dangers of spiritual pride, self-reliance, and indifference to virtue. By its light alone we can expose those secret sins and lurking vices, which are found in every heart, sapping slowly, but surely, the foundations of innocence, and gradually forming themselves into habits which will in time destroy all our virtues.

To know ourselves is to be just to ourselves.

12. The wise man in all his actions looks beyond the present ; and the man who would act justly by himself, will secure his future happiness at all hazards. Present happiness is something, though of short duration ; future

felicity is every thing, because certain and endless. To obtain the latter, the wise man will prudently sacrifice the former. So should we expect the man of the world to reason, as his daily occupation is in balancing losses against gains ; but strange it is, that though self-interest be the ruling passion in all his affairs here below, it has no influence over him in higher objects, as in the gain of endless happiness, and salvation of the soul. He says not to himself, "What if I gain the whole world, and lose my own soul ;" because his life is as the life of an irrational animal ; the present pleasure fills his mind ; and he reflects not on prospective pleasures, which can only be enjoyed after death.

What act of injustice to oneself can exceed, in folly and madness, this act ! Does it arise from a secret suspicion that a future life is a mere speculation of the mind ; a mere fable invented by priestcraft to perpetuate temporal power ; which all may profess to believe, but act as if they believed it not ? It is a problem we cannot solve.

13. *Justice to God* clearly implies justice to man and to ourselves. Any act of injustice is necessarily an offence to God ; because the creature can never waive his allegiance to the Creator. In Scripture, the just and the perfect man are terms synonymous ; he is a good man in relation to his neighbours, and, by a life of holiness, gains the approbation of God. He is a religious as well as a moral being. He practises those three grand divisions we have made, and thereby fulfils the whole law. His duty to God demands far more than the obedience to the moral law ; for it includes religious obligation—a duty unknown between man and man. Therefore he finds himself in a relation different from any that can affect him on earth ;

the relationship of the creature to the Creator, in a state of nature, but as the child to the Father, in the light of revelation ; who requires worship as God, love as a Parent, obedience as a Lawgiver, and allegiance as King of heaven and of earth.

14. There are scarcely any savage tribes who have not recognized a presiding deity ; and the knowledge, however faint and obscure, calls forth, as a natural result, spontaneous worship, sometimes for protection against evil, and sometimes with the hope of benefits. This rite, flowing from the savage nature, is a proof of the depth of reverence in the human soul ; and, surely, if a savage, by natural reason, offers adoration to his god, it is a duty that is more obvious and necessary to a Christian. His knowledge of God revealed to him, the lofty attributes with which he invests him, as Goodness, Wisdom, and Power, excite greater and nobler ideas than any savage can possess ; and his worship ought, therefore, to be far more pure and spiritual.

15. Justice to God implies a deep and permanent sense of gratitude, for he is the Giver of all good ; a love and veneration for his holy nature ; an implicit obedience to all his laws ; a religious consciousness of his presence everywhere ; a communion with him in our silent, secret thoughts ; and a fervent desire to promote his glory, and to defend his honour. Whatever we be to men, sincerity is what God requires of us. Sincerity must be the basis of our intercourse with him ; we must worship him in spirit and in truth, otherwise all our professions are worse than nothing, for we are both sinners to ourselves, and hypocrites to God. “ He who is unjust is impious towards God and his parents, and lawless towards others ; so that

though he should sacrifice hecatombs, and adorn temples with ten thousand gifts, he will be so much the more unholy and impious in his deliberate choice ;” is the language of a pagan philosopher, and must be the philosophy of a Christian.

16. To be strictly just in all our conduct in life, demands a strong mind, and a determined resolution. We must possess moral courage and decision, so as to defy the opinions and prejudices of men, and to act up to our own sense of what is just and right. No false arguments, no persuasions, no blandishments, must be allowed to divert us from the straight path of rectitude. Many such temptations shall assail us ; but let us remember always, even in the hour of trial when our virtue may stagger, that no human power can make that just which is unjust. Justice is recorded in heaven, and who dare change the decree ?

Weak men, and unstable, are often guilty of injustice through mere moral fear, though, at the same time, their motives and intentions be good. Others are also guilty of injustice in yielding to their passions and emotions, however apparently on the side of virtue. Even in acts of charity and benevolence, we may often find justice violated.

17. Demosthenes, Alexander, Pericles, Themistocles, Cicero, are names more famous in the mouths of men than Aristides the *Just* ; but who would not rather have the title of *Just*, than that of the *Eloquent*, the *Great*, the *Politician*, or the *Rhetorician* ?

Themistocles, when asked to play, replied, “ I cannot fiddle, but I can, out of a little village, make a great city.” Despite this boast, Aristides and his calm dignified virtues shine more nobly in history than the more dazzling, but less substantial qualities, of Themistocles.



## ON ECONOMY.

~~~~~  
Symbol XIX.—*Integrum fasciculum in ignem ne mittito.*
Lay not the whole faggot on the fire.
~~~~~

1. **ECONOMY** is the offspring of prudence; and **economy** is the parent of wealth. This virtue, or principle, must be possessed by those who amass riches; but the virtue is often lost in the descendant. The associates of economy are temperance and moderation. The Greeks so identified wisdom with moderation, that they expressed or signified both by the same word, *sophrosyne*. And in this they were right. For moderation is wise, though perhaps not wisdom, and has the very life-blood of wisdom; and they may, therefore, be considered as one.

The principle of moderation prevents economy degenerating to penuriousness, or being tainted with avarice. Economy and wisdom are inseparable, so long as wisdom and moderation are related to each other. Economy is the principle of moderation, applied to the incomes of individuals, or of states. In the one case it increases human happiness, in the other enhances prosperity.

2. Of all men, he who has wealth bequeathed to him, stands most in need of this virtue; for then it is seldom to be found. The want of it often proves his ruin; in

riot and dissipation he runs his wild career, never dreaming that the deepest well has a bottom. His wealth may seem exhaustless, but so are his desires; and, therefore, the more amount of wealth, however great, cannot protect the extravagant and reckless from his ultimate fate—poverty and ruin. There is no connection betwixt the amount of income and the vice of extravagance. One man may be as extravagant on a small income, as another may be on one a hundred times greater. It may be laid down as a maxim, that he who lives beyond his income wants the virtue of economy. When this virtue is lost, like the loss of many others, it leads on by degrees to the opposite vices; it prompts us to contract debts which we have no hope of paying; debt leads to careless extravagance; extravagance and debt destroy all honesty and all delicacy of honour; and then, to shun the evils brought upon us, mean subterfuge, lying, low devices of all kinds, and cowardice, are the results.

3. It is a common thing to call a man who has ruined himself *unfortunate*; but an uncommon thing to call him *criminal*. Because, even when the rotten stick has lost its gilt, it is still regarded as a stick once gilded. The fall from wealth to poverty is often pitied, when it should be condemned; for, if profligacy be the cause (as generally it is), we err in calling it a misfortune, when it is really a crime. We should have, therefore, no more sympathy for *him*, than we have for other criminals,—him who, enjoying vast wealth and magnificent estates, the patrimony of ancestors, squanders them for ignoble pleasures and on low pursuits; thereby impoverishing himself and his posterity. He is criminal under the easiest system of morals; and in whatever light we consider the subject, he must be so in

the eye of God. The penalty may not overtake him here, but it is certain hereafter.

4. There is much mock-humanity in the world. If a great criminal of this kind, who has, besides, enjoyed the glare of titles and honours, suffers a reverse of fortune, as it is called, but which is solely attributable to his own imprudence and ungodly course of life, there is immediately a gush of sentiment, an expression of sympathy, for his reduced state—followed, perhaps, by a subscription or grant from the crown. But let the same *misfortune* befall a poor man—poor in comparison—brought about by no misdeeds of his own—and what is the consequence? The principle that poverty is a crime comes into operation; and he is expelled from all sympathy, except that, indeed, which is shown to the mendicant, or which public charitable institutions hold out. Yet this man may have done good to his country, and is therefore entitled to reward; while the great man may be able to record nothing of himself, but profusion, profligacy, and extravagance.

5. In many, if not in most cases, want of economy carries a severer punishment than any law could inflict. The victim of extravagance and profusion has, in the actual miseries of poverty, a perpetual memorial of his past life, and, in consequence, a sufficient cause for repentance. The total loss of all his property, which might have been his still by common prudence—leaves a sting which he can never cease to feel. Unlike the poor man, say the labourer, he cannot so easily accommodate himself to circumstances; for the deprivation of every comfort, every luxury, cannot be easily borne. Besides, there is the fall of pride, which, rising with his wealth, has tumbled to the same level. To maintain the outward show, struggles, painful and pro-

tracted, must be made—struggles that can only be maintained by courses offensive to all pride and decency; among former associates (if his presence can now be borne), what torture of feeling must he endure? He, who was once haughty and proud, now suffers the upturned lip of scorn; he, who once rolled in wealth, and the power of wealth, despising poverty as the lowest of crimes—must now condescend to envy, and hate those who possess it; he, who delighted to surprise the world by show, splendour, and extravagance, must now retire dazzled by the ostentation of others; and with a heart rankling with malignity and unrelenting hate.

6. Man is told to imitate the bee and the ant; emblems of industry and prudence; those virtues that bring wealth and happiness in their train. The instinct of the ant, in laying up a store for the winter, should be exemplified in the wisdom of man, who is equally bound to provide, by due economy, for the future. His family demand this common act of prudential economy; if he have no family, the prospect of old age—that night in which no man should work—imperatively calls upon him to provide against it. What a pitiful object to behold grey hairs striving to live by daily labour! To see hoary locks put forth the feeble energies of a body already spent! To see old age struggling against the fear of want and hunger! By economy, those evils might be all averted. But, alas! man prefers to be deluded by a present pleasure, than to act by the dictates of wisdom that would secure to him future happiness.

7. The necessary wants of man are easily supplied; even moderate comforts and rational pleasures demand no great outlay of money. A man may enjoy all the real pleasures of life without overstepping the bounds of prudence or

economy; because those pleasures are determined by the habits and income of the individual. There is no such thing as positive pleasure; all pleasure is relative to the person; and he who commands a moderate income may enjoy as much happiness as the rich and great. The amount of happiness to be enjoyed depends upon himself; and not upon any abstract or definitive idea. One glass of small, may be as full as one of large, dimensions, says one of our own moralists. The wants of man may be few or many, according to the individual; and, as they are regulated, so shall be his happiness. He who has fewest wants, says an ancient sage, comes nearest to the gods.

8. It is not well that man should always labour. His temporal as well as spiritual interests demand a cessation in the decline of life. Some years of quiet and reflection are necessary, after a life of industry and activity. There is more to concern him in life than incessant occupation, and its product—wealth. He who has been a slave all his life to one monotonous mechanical pursuit, can hardly be fit for another world. The release from toil in old age most have the prospective pleasure of; and in the reality it is as pleasing as it is useful, and salutary to the mind. Such advantages, however, can only be gained by prudence and economy in youth; we must save like the ant, before we can hope to have any rest in the winter of our days.

## ON PRODIGALITY AND EXTRAVAGANCE.

~~~~~

Symbol XX.—In sepulchro ne dormito.
Sleep not on a grave.

~~~~~

1. WE cannot presume to certify, that our wisest readers do, in all cases, exercise their ingenuity on these symbols, before they appeal to our judgment and sagacity; but we can imagine them trying their skill on this particular one, and may infer the following to be some of the interpretations they would adopt. 1. It means, indulge not your ease on grave and important occasions. 2. Remember death; and spend not your days in sloth and indifference. 3. At the hour of death be awake to your awful situation; and wisely prepare to meet the Judge of all. It must, however, be recollected, that what is obvious, in things of this kind, is seldom true; because, if the solution were on the surface, there would be an end to all mystery; and, consequently, an end to all curiosity and interest. The interpretation we have chosen to adopt is one ready to our hand:—"that the estates our parents leave us should not serve to make us live in idleness and luxury."

2. It is proverbial, that if parents amass riches, their

children spend them. The prudent carefully gather and accumulate; their descendants scatter and waste. Prudence is the virtue of the father; prodigality the vice of the son. The former possesses a clear idea of the value of money; because, all he has saved being the product of labour and industry, he spends it with proportionate care; but the son, merely inheriting property, values it only by the amount of luxury, or the number of pleasures it can purchase. The prospective ideas in the mind of the parent of making a provision for futurity; or securing to himself an old age of ease and competence; or advancing himself to the independence which wealth secures, rarely influence the mind or conduct of the son. He neither reflects, reasons, nor calculates, in the same way as his parent. The cause and effect in this case operate so generally as to attract observation; and from frequent observation it has become proverbial. From this we may infer (not only as a speculative idea), that nature has so designed it, for the purpose of correcting or diminishing an evil which has reached a gigantic magnitude in this country—the undue accumulation of property in a few hands.

3. When a man is known to inherit wealth from an ancestor, he is often more esteemed than those who make it. Perhaps for the reasons above. He is instantly surrounded by friends and flatterers; and receives as much praise and honour, as if all the wealth he enjoys were of his own creation; whereas, his possession of it appears to have no higher merit than accident. Those friends and flatterers discover, too, in the rich man, what riches cannot give—honour and virtue—and a host of good qualities, that have no more real existence than the allusions of a dream. For, as Sydney sarcastically remarks of the

power of gold, "that it can gild a rotten stick, while dirt can sully an ingot."

" Aurea nunc vere sunt sæcula ;  
Plurimus auro venit honos."

4. It is certain that wealth, so inherited, in the generality of cases, inflicts those evils on the possessor to which Pythagoras alludes. The stimulus of industry is uprooted; all motive for an active life is taken away; every incentive, every spur to virtues such as moderation, self-denial, and economy, are either weakened or destroyed. The energy and vigour of the mind, from which great deeds spring, hardly rise above the supply of a luxury, or the pursuit of a pleasure. The frame of the body and the strength of the mind are relaxed by perpetual enjoyment; and he who might have done some good, or acquired some influence, or earned a reputation in a state of comparative poverty, sinks, as a rich man, into nothingness; when the grave closes over him he is forgotten and despised even by the adulators who were enriched by his bounty, and who reaped the benefit of his extravagance.

5. To rise above the enervating power of wealth demands a mind with more vigour than often falls to the lot of such men. Before he can drive off this baneful influence he must become attached to objects of higher importance; he must, in a manner, exalt his mind above the level it tends to, and consider his position as a moral agent — as a rational and responsible being. Acting in accordance with these views, riches will in no way interfere with the fulfilment of every duty in life; while riches put within his reach, first, the command of independence (no small thing), and, secondly, the power of extending his sphere of action. With a mind thus alive to its real position,



wealth cannot enslave to indolence, or dissolve him to the softness and carelessness of pleasure.

6. It may be said with truth *now* of riches what was *formerly* said of knowledge—riches are power. Without riches a man is a cypher in the world ; he is not respected, for he has not that which gives power and consequence. In England, of all countries which most pretends to religious zeal, it is acknowledged that poverty is a crime ; and, shame be it said, it is that country in particular, where gold is found always to “gild a rotten stick.”

It is obvious, if riches give power, there is an advantage, a supreme advantage, in their possession ; for so long as they maintain their influence in the world, they are great instruments of action either for good or evil. In the hands of a fool, a voluptuary, or a profligate, they are instruments of pleasure merely ; but in the hands of good men they give a power of “doing good,” which, perhaps, nothing else can equal.

7. He who has wealth left to him has no need to labour. He need not work by the sweat of his brow—that law to the power of which man was doomed at the beginning of the world. He need not want for any pleasure or luxury. He has the power of possessing every thing pleasing to the taste, or desirable to the eye. His whole life may be one smooth current of enjoyment, if not of happiness. If he is indolent by habit, there is no need for exertion ; if he would indulge in sloth, laziness, or idleness, he can indulge, and yet all his wants be amply, prodigally supplied. These pleasures and indulgences, moreover, are not enjoyed by any merit of his ; they are commanded by the wealth carefully and anxiously made by another, who, with all this wealth, his own by right, did not, perhaps, indulge him-

self to one tythe the extent of his successor. To sum up all, this man by mere accident of birth becomes rich, while others around him of superior merit are pinched by poverty, and to whom the means of living cause a continual struggle. The fool rolls in wealth; the wise man, like Diogenes, seeks shelter in a tub.

8. The clear inference from this apparent anomaly, that at first sight seems to set at nought the agency of moral justice in the world, is the responsibility of the rich man; a responsibility the wise man would do well to shun. Riches are "the wise man's cumbrance, if not snare," says Milton. If riches command all those pleasures—all that ease mentioned above, their possession demands far more than the enjoyment of those pleasures, or the indulgence of that ease. It demands the exercise of virtues more difficult in proportion to the amount of riches—such as moderation, temperance, and self-denial; for although all things can be enjoyed, all things may not be enjoyed. It demands a consideration for the welfare of others which the selfishness caused by riches blunts, and an active zeal in extending human happiness by the encouragement of benevolence and the relief of poverty; it demands the sacrifice of time and ease as a compensation; it demands a life of active virtues as a return, in which wealth shall be turned to higher and nobler purposes than mere ostentation or selfish enjoyment.

ON HONESTY AND DISHONESTY; AND THE LOVE  
OF RICHES.

---

**Symbol LXX.**—*Sinistra cibum ne sumito.*  
*Take not food with the left hand.*

---

1. CATULLUS, writing to Asinius, who had stole his handkerchief, says,—

“ *Mauricine Asini, manu sinistra*  
*Non bene uteris, in joco atque vino:*  
*Tollis lintea negligentiorum.*”

For, according to Dacier, the left hand has always been the hand suspected of thievery. And we are enjoined not to use it, therefore, but to live on what has been honestly obtained by labour, and not by rapine and dishonesty. The symbol forbids it; all laws, moral and religious, are against it. For the protection of property human laws condemn and punish dishonest acts; to obey those laws is the wisest policy; but moral and religious laws assume a loftier aim, and condemn those acts without reference to detection or ulterior punishment. The human law can only punish where it detects; it attempts not to pierce the inward thoughts or the secret actions of men. All men, therefore, who pass undetected are presumed to be honest. Not so, however, with the moral law in its reli-

gious sanctions ; for the man who is upright and honest to all the world may be guilty to his own conscience, and guilty in the eye of God. Human laws are derived from moral laws ; they are founded on moral laws ; but there is this difference, that the executive power regards not the immorality of the act as a breach of a divine law, but only in relation to property and security, and indirectly to the welfare of the state. Thus the law takes no cognizance of those crimes, more heinous than dishonesty, which only injure the individual transgressor, as licentiousness, intemperance, malice, and such like, so long as they affect not the life and property and security of others.

2. Dishonesty, then, as a breach of the divine law, is a crime of man against God ; and, though undiscovered on earth, will be exposed and punished hereafter. In a deeper sense, dishonesty consists not always in the *doing*, but in the *being* ; because he who *would* be dishonest, but *cannot*, is not free from guilt. The mere transference of property is a small thing compared with the state of the soul which can succumb to crime and fall into temptation. The fact of detection by man forms no necessary part of the crime in a religious point of view ; and, if undetected, the crime is still a crime, depending not on any human contingency.

The Spartan doctrine was, that a thief detected ought to be punished ; but a thief who had cunning and ingenuity to conceal his thievery, is worthy of praise. Here morality is put *hors de combat*. That expertness which a thief acquires by long practice is unduly elevated, because it argues a very low kind of talent ; a talent consisting with low cunning and deceit, but inconsistent with the nobler feelings of man. Although the loose principles

of the Spartans shock the mind from the candour with which they were taught by their legislators, they differ very little from what actually takes place amongst us, though we are ashamed to confess it with equal honesty. Thus, for example, we can perceive no actual difference in a moral view between the man who defrauds on a magnificent scale, and the trembling sinner who steals a purse ; but in the world there is a manifest distinction obvious to a close observer.

3. What is honesty ? The virtual power of resisting temptation ? The result of the shame of exposure, or fear of punishment ? Honesty is more than that ; it is the abiding, permanent state of mind acquired by the influence of rigid virtue and strict principle, which never *thinks* of being dishonest ; which strives not to be honest, but is so. An honest man no more thinks of robbing another than he dreams of committing murder, or parricide, or sacrilege. He is honest, because his mind is honest. His mind is honest, not by any innate virtue, but by an elevation, step by step, above the power of temptation, or passion of avarice, or desire of covetousness ; in the same way that a man who is accustomed to see masses of gold and treasures of money, loses those passions which a stranger to them would most certainly be affected by.

4. This is true magnanimity. It is not a picture impossible in nature, or even too highly coloured. The reality of the image may be discovered in the world, not by a single example, but in many. In truth, we cannot conceive a magnanimous mind stooping to an act of dishonesty. The very idea seems a violation of nature, because it would be an event totally unexpected. One strong reason against the possibility is, that great minds are with-

out the love of money ; the desire of great possessions, avarice, and those ten thousand vices allied to avarice, are passions which are unknown to them. They are affected by other desires, by as strong passions, but Mammon is a deity they disown in thought and in practice. They " see pale Mammon pine amidst his store," and laugh, because the love of money is a passion as strange to them, and as ridiculous, as the want of it would be to the worshipper of the golden calf.

5. Holy priests preach against the love of money ; moralists declaim against it as the dire enemy of virtue ; philosophers of the cynic school laugh at the vice ; and we of the Pythagorean school laugh too, but oftener we lament, and stand in wonder and astonishment. Priests, and moralists, and philosophers fail, say some, because they only preach and declaim, while they indulge the vice themselves. Whether the charge be true or false, we leave every one to judge *con amore* ; but of the failure there can be no doubt, for the vice increases daily ; from a vice it has mounted to a crime. It may be that the weapons are barbless used to assail the impregnable fortress. If so, there are other arrows in the quiver. If we are *determined* to kill the teeming monster which threatens to lay waste the fair plains of virtue ; and to swallow up all religion ; that essays to extinguish the lamp of truth ; if we do not feign, and court, and nourish it (thereby mocking all sincerity and godly zeal), we cannot fail.

6. As the solemn denunciations of religion have had no effect ; if the grave censures of moralists have fallen still-born from the lips, we may try the lighter weapons of ridicule, of satire, of mockery,—those weapons used by Juvenal in the most corrupt era of Rome with biting force,

when remonstrance and argument would have failed of effect.

To turn away the money-lover from his delusive god is a work beyond any single hand ; for if he lets this base passion have dominion over him, in spite of the fearful warnings of religion, it is not to be expected he could feel the shafts of ridicule from one or from a few hands. He must be a colossus to succeed in such an enterprise. A corporate body or society might have some influence—comprehending all who would repudiate this idolatry ; having for its patrons the sovereign and the elite of her gentry, as well as the body-clerical ; being endowed with certain privileges and limited in its power by definitive laws, so that the attack on the evil, or vice, should never become an attack on the individual. It should possess among its members a choice body of men whose duty it would be to ridicule and satirize the vice of the age, their publications being revised carefully, and sanctioned by the society. Further details we cannot enter into ; but we may add, that, in due time, an influence would be exercised over the public mind which would mitigate, if not destroy, the monster-vice ; because, as every member of the society would have attached to his membership a testimony to his character, and as he would, in his particular sphere, have a certain influence, however small, others, in considerations of the advantages belonging to the society, would find it necessary to unite.

This idea is naturally suggested by the practice in other cases, and by the greater power which union gives to bodies over individuals.

7. In conclusion ; it would seem needless to assert, that the love of money is at the root of all dishonesty. In

Misery and apprehension are its certain consequences. When danger is coming with rapid strides, indecision falters, is paralysed, and destruction follows. The mind laments its weakness when too late. It knows how to act, when the time for action is past.

3. Indecision is the foundation of all doubts and perplexities, in belief and in opinion. It leaves the mind in an ocean of errors, without rudder or compass; without opinions as guides, or principles as rules of action. The line which separates truth from falsehood is not clearly perceived; every vague opinion of man throws the mind into doubt and perplexity. Better almost to have erroneous opinions and false principles, than exist in this state of doubt; for they indicate some marks of thought; they may appear right and good to the mind which holds them; whereas the undecided are devoid of all fixed opinions or principles. We find men pass through life in this awful state of indecision, as if the world afforded nothing whereon to exercise the reflective powers; as if human nature, religion, philosophy, and such questions, were not fit subjects of inquiry, of belief, and of speculation.

4. It is not too much to say, there are many who possess such frigid indifference, such indecision of character, that they have not made up their minds whether there is a God and a hereafter; whether religion be true, or the mere fables and lies of impostors. There are still a greater body who never meditate on such questions at all; but acquiesce with the opinion of the world, without inquiry, or care, or interest. Which character is to be preferred, would require a better casuist than we are to judge. This, however, seems manifest, that he who considers religion not worthy to form opinions on; or who permits not its



profound questions to enter into his thoughts, is not in any great degree different from him who has no religion at all. It is not enough merely to make the profession of a creed ; to agree with general opinion, that there is a God, and a world hereafter ; but to be religious, or even rational, those great subjects should sometimes deeply engage the thoughts—engage them with an interest proportionate to their intrinsic importance.

5. Religion is the most momentous of all speculations. Its doctrines are the most important to man, as they influence his life here ; and, especially, as that influence is carried beyond the grave. To rest in doubt about its truth, whether it be truly a revelation from heaven, or the mere cunning fables of crafty priests, is surely supreme folly. If others are found to derive hope and consolation, and temporal happiness from this source, is it not worth the labour to inquire, whether those hopes are substantial or illusory ? If the athiest reasons himself into the belief of there being no God, it behoves the Christian to decide with firmness that there is a God ; and that he has made a revelation of his will to man.

More than implicit belief is demanded by reason : for example, such an inquiry as leads to conviction, is required by every man ; for without it doubts shall assail us on every side ; the arguments of enemies make us stagger and waver ; and weakness and indecision shall constantly excite contempt in others, and misery in ourselves.

The fool says in his heart there is no God : he feels the infidelity, but need not express it. He is not a fool because of weakness of intellect, or moral turpitude ; but because of indecision and indifference about a question which demands deep thought and consideration. He is a fool,

because he will not take the pains to inquire into the grounds of his folly. He is, finally, a fool, because he hastily believes what the ordinary exercise of reason would show to be an absurdity and a contradiction.

6. The symbol may be further extended in its application : each may apply the words to himself, in relation to his conduct as a moral, a religious being, and in reference to his duties in life ; or in all cases where doubt and hesitation are productive of evil.

In coming nigh the temple of truth, let us enter boldly and willingly ; in approaching the temple of God, let us not hesitate at the threshold, as if our duties to Him were things of indifference, but enter the sacred courts, and join in the song of praise. In entering the world, we must needs assume all our decision and firmness ; for there are rocks to avoid, and greater evils still to shun ; the subtle quicksands of wickedness, falsehood, and deceit. We must become the champions of truth, and the unrelenting enemies of vice. And, if our opinions are well grounded—our principles firmly established ; if a rational conviction fortify our minds ; we may calmly encounter those trials that await us in this chequered life. If, on the contrary, we waver and hesitate at the threshold, we shall, in an evil hour, find our principles given to the winds ; and all the landmarks and beacons of truth and virtue swept away before the tide of sophistry, irreligion, and deceit.

ON WEAKNESS OF CHARACTER: ON THE PASSIONS  
AND VIRTUES OF WOMEN.

~~~~~  
Symbol XXXIII.—*Arma a muliere sumministrata rejice.*
Refuse the weapons a woman offers.
 ~~~~~

1. THIS is a symbol which requires considerable delicacy in the treatment, as it reflects on the discretion of the fairer part of creation. If we held the harsh and stern opinions of Euripides, Sir Thomas Browne, and others, this symbol would have opened up an opportune field for sarcasm and ill nature; but as our feelings tend in a gentler direction with regard to women, the reader will be pleased to give the writer credit for the utmost finesse and delicacy in the management of this forbidding subject. To have passed it by altogether could not be tolerated, as no reasonable man can expect us to sacrifice our imperative duty, even in such a cause.

“ Woman,” observes Dacier—and his be the odium—  
 “ by reason of the weakness of her sex, is the emblem of anger and revenge. Pythagoras therefore meant, that we ought to reject all the suggestions revenge inspires.”

2. We recollect that Sir Thomas Browne, in the *Religio Medicis*, laments that nature had not planned a more

convenient way for the increase of the population than she has done. This extravagant notion was probably borrowed from a passage in the *Hippolytus* of Euripides, thus translated :

“ Wherefore, O Jove, beneath the sun’s fair light  
That specious mischief, woman, didst thou place ?  
For with the human race, if thou wouldst fill  
The peopled earth, no need they should be raised  
From woman : at thy shrines might men present  
Iron, or brass, or heaps of massy gold,  
To purchase children, in proportion given  
To the rich offering ; man might then have lived  
Free and uncumber’d with this female burden.”

3. It would appear from what we can gather, that women are more under the dominion of their passions than men ; it is certain their feelings are more sensitive ; their emotions more lively. The same beings who are the slaves of their affections ; who are alive to every deep emotion of love and tenderness, may become equally warm and intemperate when they enlist on the side of a bad passion. The greatest observer of human nature, in all its aspects, has noticed this peculiar consistency. “ A woman moved is like a fountain troubled—muddy, ill-seeming, thick, bereft of beauty.” They deliberate less than men before they act ; reason with them is less strong ; and, acting more by impulse or passion, they must, in most cases, be dangerous guides or advisers. If women love violently, they are said to hate as violently. There is no moderation in their passions. Thus it is that a bad woman is regarded as the greatest scourge to man—

———“ Than the viper far  
More noxious—”

says Medea, and, therefore, a judge of her own sex ; an evil against which nature has provided no remedy but

death. Nor in the crimes of women, as history testifies, is there any moderation ; they can go from step to step, from deep to a deeper still, with an ease and determination not natural to men. Where the passion of love sways them (and with them it is all-powerful), they hesitate not at any obstacle which impedes, or stands between them and the object of desire. Women love power ; but, if given to them, they abuse it, because their passions are stronger than their reason. But if women are creatures of passion ; if they are weak, capricious, and the slaves of feeling, they are, on the other hand, level, if not above men, in their capacity for the practice of virtue. Their fortitude is greater ; their humanity greater ; their purity far above men. They are, from a softness of nature, wonderfully pleasing ; without them no fit substitute could be found, in spite of the opinions of Euripides and Sir Thomas Browne.

4. Woman is made to obey ; man to be obeyed ; and it is from this law that, in all ages, it has been deemed contemptible for a man to become the slave of a woman. Man is the natural guardian of woman ; he is her guide and natural master, at the same time friend and protector : but when the man crouches to the woman ; when she rules and he obeys, becoming the instrument of her passions and capricious will, there is a perversion of nature, a subversion of natural order, which men have always made the subject of ridicule and contempt. This ridicule and contempt always arise in proportion as the male casts off the prerogatives of his sex, and assumes those of the opposite ; for there is something repulsive in seeing a man with the character of another sex. That which calls up the feelings of ridicule as respects man, creates a stronger

feeling in relation to women ; for a masculine woman is an object of extreme abhorrence and disgust.

5. If we will use the weapons a woman offers, we may become her slave and the instrument of her blind and furious passions ; for we subject ourselves to her will, and must obey all its caprice and waywardness. Those weapons are employed to satisfy her revenge, expiate her hatred, or gratify her love ; to do which we must often shut our eyes to the dictates of justice, and our ears to the calls of mercy ; we must not deliberate, but act with all the fury of wild justice : if we have to punish, it must be quick, to please her rage ; if we have to reward, profusion and extravagance must strew our path ; or whatever we do as her right hand, shall be without any degree or moderation.

6. The women of Crotona were licentious and corrupt ; Pythagoras would have them virtuous and innocent, and enacted this singular law :—" That no free woman carry with her above one slave, unless she be drunk ; that she never go out of the city in the night, unless to commit adultery ; that she wear neither gold nor embroidery, unless she make profession of being a prostitute." This law acted on them with talismanic power ; they became pure and virtuous ; and it is further said, that being convinced by our great moralist, that the true ornaments of a woman are modesty and chastity, they threw off their robes of gold and embroidery, and consecrated them to the temple of Juno.

7. The true ornaments of a woman are chastity and modesty ! They are the gems which give her a value above all price—the dower priceless, and above all gold ! Fit doctrine for Crotona ; fit doctrine falling from pagan lips ; fit for savage times ; for ancient times ; but not fit for men

now. Whatever value the doctrine be of, it is certain men do not act as if they believed modesty and chastity *alone* to be the true ornaments of a woman. They are valued in some degree, no doubt, when they exist with other ornaments, as land and riches; but among those who have neither land to captivate men with their modesty, nor riches to exalt their admiration for chastity, they are virtues very lowly esteemed. They may be bought at every market, and cheaply, too, says the admirer of modesty and chastity, set off with more solid advantages.

8. There is a power prevailing in the world which was never suspected by our simple philosopher: the power of riches, which gives modesty to lewdness, and chastity to a prostitute; which finds a winning grace in boldness and impudence; beauty in deformity; and, by a magic power, changes and transforms all things to their contraries. Where there are no riches, we have a perversion of nature equally strange; for if virtue shine like Golconda's caverns, we esteem it not; if beauty surpass the most extravagant dreams of youth, a film rests upon the eyes, and conceals it from view.

9. We may remark, that the conduct and character of women are influenced and modified by those of men, as men are more or less influenced by women. When Pythagoras determined to reform the manners and vices of the Crotons, with profound knowledge of human nature, he first applied himself to the men, and when he had reformed them, he found the task with the other sex less onerous. With the men, the reformation was half concluded. The luxury and vicious habits of those women arose, as they do in most cases, from the indulgence of

their parents and their husbands ; who being equally bad in their morals, had no care for their women and children.

The regimen he recommended to the men was temperance or moderation, as the great virtue of each sex, and of every age ; and as the only preserver of the endowments of mind and body. He told them, that riches were a weak anchor (O ! tempora, &c.), and glory yet a weaker ; that beauty and strength of body, posts, dignities, authority, and reputation, were anchors too, but most brittle and faithless ones. The only good anchors he esteemed were piety, prudence, magnanimity, and courage. These no tempest can loosen or unmoor. For, said he, elevating himself, it is the law of God, that no strength should subsist in any thing but virtue ; and that all besides should give weakness and misery.

As a warning to both sexes, he said, there were no persons who were so severely punished in hell, as husbands who had not lived well with their wives, and wives that had not lived well with their husbands.



ON QUARRELS AND DIVISIONS: THE EFFECT OF  
PHILOSOPHY ON THE MIND: THE CONFLICT OF  
GOOD AND EVIL IN THE SOUL.

~~~~~  
Symbol XXXV.—*In via ne ligna caedito.*
Cut not wood in the way.
~~~~~

1. WHATEVER ancient interpreters have said to the contrary, we, as the greater expositors of these inestimable ancient fragments hold, that the symbol is an injunction against quarrels and divisions in our pilgrimage through life; and, therefore, a recommendation to patience, placidity of temper, and equanimity; a recommendation we may here appropriately direct to some of our more excellent readers, who, as travellers on a long journey, may have kept on their course rejoicing; and who are now arrived at this almost the last stage of their pleasing pilgrimage. If they have sustained throughout that patient, calm, because philosophic, and, therefore, happy state of mind, we commend them cordially; and hold out more than faint hopes of a speedy conversion to a system, that shall, most certainly, make them wiser, and better, and happier men; when they shall enjoy pleasure without expense, and possess happiness without excitement.

2. As in many things besides, there is an art in travelling; and he is the more skilful traveller who success-

fully shortens the journey by stratagem, or self-deception; by varying the route, or mixing up in his mind objects that beguile lazy time, and afford pleasing amusement. Along with the writer, the patient reader (or traveller) has no cause to complain of weariness or monotony; for we have exerted all our attractive qualities of converse and information to deceive him, and withdraw his thoughts from the distance he had to travel; we have charmed him with such variety, and seduced him on, with so much charming grace, and filled his soul with so many ideas, that he can have had no leisure to get weary or impatient. What scenes have we not presented to his view! What a perpetual variety has delighted the eye! True, there are barren mountains rising sometimes before him in grim but chilling majesty; but soon they disappear, while smiling plains succeed to view: rugged heaths must sometimes be crossed, affording rest to the eye, but giving sustenance to the mind; but these again are rapidly succeeded by rich and cultivated valleys.

3. Come away! Let us pursue our journey together, and see by what arts we can make the distance still before us be passed over agreeably, and with mutual satisfaction and improvement. The few ardent, and zealous, and truth-loving disciples, who will persevere to the end, shall have their reward. But those who have not reached this stage—stumbling heedlessly on their way—and who refuse or hesitate to proceed, longing to return to that easier path they have been accustomed to tread, are to be treated with that severity their indifference merits.

If they cannot taste of the waters of truth without loathing, nor pursue the path of virtue without a stagger towards ignorance and vice, we must purge their souls, as

Hippocrates purged the bodies of men, by a prolonged course of philosophic and initiatory medicine. The corrupt parts must be cauterized before we can effect the cure of a disease so deep set ; strong cathartical remedies we must give, that the soul may be prepared to receive new life and vigour.

In order to effect this, the patient, or pupil, must first leave the haunts of men, and abandon all the pursuits, the excitement, and pleasure, which have closed his obdurate mind to the light of truth and calls of wisdom. Retirement into the country, solitude and solitary meditation, reading worthy books, and a deep draught of philosophy, shall have wonderful effects. He must learn to reflect without the aid of others, by slow but sure degrees ; as a child learns to walk, first by crawling, then by standing with assistance, and finally by accomplishing what seemed before a great difficulty—the exact counterpoise or balance of the body. When he returns to the world, and mixes again with men, he will be astonished at their weak powers of reflection ; at the utter confusion of their minds, and all the consequent perplexities of conflicting opinions ; and their total incapacity for any mental work above the ordinary affairs of life.

4. After the pupil has undergone a sufficient training, and become a Pythagorean among philosophers, he will be conscious to a marvellous change in the texture of his mind. As the man of science, in order to enlarge his catalogue of plants, insects, or such like, peacefully pursues his object in a summer's day, and, with a philosophic spirit, enjoys the sweet serenity and all the pleasures of nature at the same time ; now resting on the enamelled grass, in the contemplation of some distant view, or watch-

ing the sun-flies in the beauty of their forms and varied colours ; or examining the blades of grass, with a curious eye, or flowers, wild yet of simple grace, which admirably shew forth creative wisdom ; all in that calmness of mind, flowing from internal harmony of being : so our pupil, once the neophyte, but now a full-fledged bird, with the same tranquillity of mind and placidity of temper—fruits of the philosophic spirit—shall come to delight in these our writings, transcripts of wisdom, fair copies of truth, and shall dwell over them with congenial pleasure, having no longer any desire to hasten on, or turn back, as if their study were a painful, irksome task, and not (as the truth) a feast, a banquet to be enjoyed again and again with renewed satisfaction.

He shall find a world brought to view, of whose existence, while in the world, he had no conception. His thoughts will take a flight, beyond all the dreams of fancy and imagination ; and he will be inclined to think he has undergone some extraordinary transformation, or passed, for a time, into a spiritual world. He will then comprehend what it is to be made in the image of God ; which no man can do, who refuses to follow our instructions, and who is steeped to the lips in mundane affairs.

5. The mind, once brought into this happy state of being, and imbued with the true spirit, can hardly condescend to a breach of the symbol, from which we appear to have digressed. As he will think unlike other men, so shall he act and feel. The Christian spirit, softening and spiritualizing the pure intellect, and conjoining with it those graces and virtues that belong eminently to religion, shall bring him to a temper against which nothing can prevail ; while the same hallowed spirit which forms

a peacemaker out of the discordant elements of anger, hatred, and revenge, shall draw out the spiritual being from the abstraction of intellect, and direct it, by the impulse of virtue and goodness, to the welfare and the good of mankind.

6. That tranquillity of mind we have alluded to, is desirable, because it is a happy state; but in quarrels and divisions, in the passions of anger, hatred, and such like, we only promote misery, by harbouring in our breasts furies, that find genial delight in the discord and anarchy of passion. Such are the effects the moral writer may point out as certain adjuncts of bad passions; such their consequences as regards human happiness. But we may be permitted to take a higher range, and view such passions in relation to man as a religious and immortal being; in the consideration of which, violent passions assume a deeper dye—a more mysterious agency; as demons whose nature partakes of the character of Evil, in a perpetual conflict, in the soul of man, with the principle of Good; and on the final issue of the encounter depends man's fitness or unfitness for a life hereafter, in which those passions can have no existence; which, if he lose, either annihilation must ensue, or, what is truer, the conflict must terminate in favour of the Evil, and the divine ray of light and goodness shall leave his soul to the sure consequences of its own guilt.

# ON PERSONAL VANITY: THE BEAUTY AND PERFECTION OF NATURE.

~~~~~  
Symbol XLV.—*Ad lucernam faciem in speculo ne contemplator.*

Regard not yourself in the mirror by the light of a torch.
~~~~~

1. MAN is a vain—the vainest of creatures: Self-flattery and self-love are passions which maintain despotic dominion over him. As now, so in the days of old (as the symbol indicates), this vain creature would even add deception to his vanity; what nature has denied he would attempt to give himself, though he deceived no one but himself. It is in personal beauty that he condescends to various deceits and subterfuges, for man is vainer of outward looks than of internal acquirements. As nature has formed him, so he is; and whether an idol of beauty, or a mass of deformity, it is no work of his; merit he can have none in either case, as these accidents are not dependent on his will; but in mental beauty, or deformity, the praise or the blame belongs truly to the possessor.

Personal beauty may sometimes be an advantage (as in the eye of woman), but often it is a positive evil, because it engrosses the attention, to the exclusion of objects of far higher importance. The possessor makes his own beauty the study of life, and neglects the cultivation of his

mind—a blessing not only more lasting, but far more meritorious in its acquisition.

2. It has been more than once remarked, that they who have no beauty themselves rail against it in others. Envy appears, therefore, to be the foundation of all attacks on the importance of this gift. The reader will, therefore, as a matter of course, conclude that our share of beauty must be small. And in this he is nearer the truth than in many other conjectures he may hazard in the course of this work; we cannot, however, subscribe, *in totidem verbis*, to the description given of one of the greatest characters the world has yet known, namely, Aristotle, “who was of moderate stature, with a shrill, squeaking voice, slender legs, and pink-eyed,” a description which scarcely approaches the *beau idéal* of beauty, as exemplified in the glorious statues of Phidias, and other sublime copiers of nature.

3. It is not reasonably to be expected that nature should award to men both personal beauty and mental gifts; and, perhaps, it is for this reason that authors, or men of genius, are so rarely endowed with the former. If beauty did exist at one time, study and the midnight lamp would soon destroy every vestige of it:

“Beauty is as summer’s fruit, which  
Are easy to corrupt, but cannot last.”

But it has been supposed, and with some truth, that the very want of personal graces is the provocative for men to become students and authors. “Whosoever hath any thing fixed in his person,” observes Lord Bacon, “that doth induce contempt, hath also a spur in himself, to rescue and deliver himself from scorn.” Thus men become writers and poets because of their ill-looks. To blind

lencies ; we must penetrate beyond the surface, and study and observe them in their deepest recesses.

To view the external world, as we look ourselves in a glass, from which we go without any recollection (for man looketh at himself, and goeth away, not knowing what manner of man he is), is to know nothing of it beyond the surface ; the wonder-workings of nature ; her excellent ways ; her mysteries ; the great principles on which she acts and elaborates her designs, can only be known by long study and patient examination. There are millions of most curious operations silently going on, which escape the vulgar eye ; and there are many seen which are neither estimated nor understood. Nature is simple in her operations, but her simplicity can only be discovered by the student of nature. The imagination, colouring all things by its own hue, distorts her simplicity and perfection ; and generates out of apparent anomalies, wonders, and mysteries, and erratic courses ; and gives being to many things that have no existence—and imagines more—all wild, irregular, and mysterious ; as if nature took her lesson from an Egyptian magician, or Chaldean magus, and not from a Being, who works out his designs by invariable laws (all their effects from causes springing in regular and preordained order) ; and not by caprice or impulse, as if coveting the admiration and curiosity of his creatures.

The deeper the examination, the greater we discover the order, and harmony, and regularity, to be of all nature's work. Those deviations in the world of stars, observed by astronomers, once supposed to be latent causes of destruction, or the embryo seeds of an ultimate world-quake, in which nature was to become chaos again, and



by which confusion dire would hereafter come upon the universe, are now happily explained, and are found to be only apparent and not real.

Such a study of nature not only conveys to our minds the truth, so far as we can go, but it corrects all imaginary and superstitious evils, and the dread of physical calamities, which have, in more ignorant times, afflicted the mind of man.

## ON SUICIDE AND INSANITY.

**Symbol XLVI**—*Iniquum imperpetratis de statione ex promissa ne decedas.*

*Quit not your post without the order of your general.*

1. WE CANNOT commend the weakness or the impatience of that philosopher who, after reading Plato's Dialogue on the *Immortality of the Soul*, rushed upon self-murder, the sooner to enjoy the felicity held out in the prospect of another life. Though such a result may demonstrate the genius and wonderful eloquence of Plato, it shows the folly of Cleombrotus.

The reasoning or declamation of *Plunko* seems generally to be directed against the crime of suicide: but from some passages in this famous dialogue, as well as from others to be gleaned from the voluminous writings of Plato, it may be inferred that he deemed self-destruction meritorious, or, at least justifiable, in some few particular cases—as in the *Republic*, where he instances a long and incurable disease; as in the *Lysis*, where he excepts a man under the dominion of such passions as make him an object of hatred to himself and disgust to others; and as in *Phaedo*, where that most admirable character, Socrates, thus holds forth:—

“ Perhaps it is not against reason to assert, that no man  
ough : to kill himself before Divinity lays him under a cer-

tain necessity of doing so, such as I am subject to at present." But in the end he preferred to drink the poisonous cup rather than infringe the canons against self-slaughter. He wisely, as in legal phrase, gave himself the benefit of the doubt conveyed in his own words.

In the same dialogue Plato introduces Philolaus, a Pythagorean, who vehemently discourses against this crime, as one whose opinion had weight and authority. One reason against the wickedness or impropriety attributed to this act may probably be discovered in a passage quoted by Socrates from a discourse in the arcana of the mysteries, to this effect:—"We are here placed as in a prison secured by a guard, and it is not lawful for any one to free himself voluntarily from this confinement and forcibly escape."

2. The Stoics (who made great pretensions to passive endurance) allowed of suicide in, at least, five particular cases; such as when a man sacrifices his life for the public good; when he is in a delirium; when he labours under an incurable disease; when he wants the necessaries of life; or when he is urged to reveal the mysteries to a tyrant. Whether they, in practice, strictly abided by these five golden rules we have no proof; but it appears that this sect were oftener guilty of that crime than any other, from which we have good cause shewn to disparage their philosophy, to rail against their lofty pretensions, and to question the soundness of their morals. We cannot even commend that prince of all the school—Cato, who found an easy remedy for all the ills that man is heir to, in the act of cutting the gordian knot of life, a door through which the veriest slave may have egress. Bad is it for the self-murderer secretly to do the deed; but far worse when he proclaims his intent to the world, and lets

his soul gush out (as Homer has it) amidst the groans and sympathy of men.

It is related by Plutarch, that nearly all the Milesian virgins that were in the city, on a sudden, and without any visible cause, resolved to destroy themselves. Many having actually done so, it was decreed that the virgins, guilty of this crime, should be carried to their funerals naked with the same rope by which they hanged themselves. The shame of such an exposure deterred the rest from repeating the crime.

In this example we may observe more wisdom and knowledge of human nature, than in the admiration and applause with which the Stoics graced the last moments of a suicide.

3. Socrates inquired whether, if we had the power, we should not severely punish a servant who, by destroying himself, deprived us of his services? And shall the Creator of all creatures not punish those impious men who rush into his presence besmeared, as it were, and polluted with their own blood, depriving themselves of that life given to them by the will and goodness of God for reasons and purposes of his own? Life belongs not to man; but it is of God; his spontaneous free-will offering; conferred as a privilege or blessing secondarily, but primarily for the glory of God and the designs he has, unknown to us, but not less certain, in the creation of mankind. He who gives life, alone has the power to take it away. No reasons of our own; no plausible sophisms of philosophy; no circumstances of life, can warrant us in taking the law into our own hands, and, in a moment of heroism or fatuity, madly frustrate the purposes of the Creator. However insignificant we may appear to men; however wretched to ourselves, or miserable in our circumstances, we are all not

less important in the eyes of God as links in the great chain of being. That insignificance, that wretchedness, which crushes us to the ground ; that misery and infelicity which envelope man sometimes in hopeless despair, may be but the forerunners of the glory and happiness which await the human spirit in its transformation to another state of being. He who is lowest here may be the highest hereafter. God is not only the Good but the Just God, and wills not that any of his creatures sink into hopeless misery ; let them but look to him as the rewarder, and their rags shall be changed for the purple and the diadem.

4. The instinct of self-preservation is so strongly implanted in us, the dread of death creates so strong a tie to life, that judges have agreed to rank suicides among the insane. This is a humane view of a crime so abhorrent to all well-regulated minds, though it be no reason, but rather an apology, for suicide. We cannot doubt that the mind is deranged when it overrules the instincts and laws of nature, and perpetrates a deed which, when sane and rational, we look upon with horror and disgust. The fear of man for death, especially a sudden or violent death, is one of the very strongest passions of his nature, and is often seen to accompany the hardened criminal to the scaffold ; and, therefore, he who lays violent hands on himself, whether in the moment of frenzy, or of delirium, or by stratagem, design, or deliberation, inflicts upon his body that pain we all shrink from (to say nothing of the hereafter), must be in a state of mind not natural to man. But this insanity is not the cause, but the effect ; that is to say, insanity may impel to suicide, but it is only the secondary cause and real effect of other pre-existing causes operating to bring the mind

into this awful state. Thus intemperance is frequently the cause of insanity, and though insanity be imputed to an act of suicide ensuing, intemperance is truly the cause of both. And this leads us to view the criminality of suicide in its moral or religious aspect, as a violation of God's laws, both natural and revealed.

5. In a state of insanity, the mind cannot be considered accountable for its actions. Where this calamity arises from disease, or disorganization of the brain, whether born with the afflicted, or caused by the most lingering process of decay, in which man himself has no part, or over which he has no control, and terminates ultimately in self-destruction, we can hardly think in all cases he can be considered a criminal in the eye of God. But as this is a question beyond our reach, let us leave it in the hands of the righteous Judge of all, whose mercies and judgments are full of grace and of truth. The case alters, however, as respects the man who, by his own vices and criminal indulgences, overturns his reason, and dies by his own hand. Though insanity prompt the act, it relieves him not from the guilt of it. As well might we assume that insanity caused by vicious courses, not terminating in suicide, relieves a man from the guilt of prior vice and immorality. Insanity is a disease, and, like any other disease, it cannot be a palliation or justification in the sight of God.

We opine that the guilt of self-murder does not consist in the mere act of taking away life, but rather in those causes which bring the mind to a state fit for the execution of such an act; just as murder is not a great crime, *because* we have deprived a fellow-being of life, but because

the mind, or soul of man, must possess a devil to urge him on to so dreadful a deed.

6. The most irreligious feature of suicide is the total want of confidence in God which it displays; the most immoral is the imbecility, cowardice, and truly abject state of the mind, which attend it. Strong passions and a weak understanding are generally the causes. The best antidote is the cultivation of the mind, and the consequent improvement of the moral and rational faculties. It is from a weakness in the understanding, along with strong passions and violent emotions, that some religious persons are led on to commit a crime least to be looked for in them—self-destruction. The impressions of religion are stronger than any others; they have a more powerful influence on the imagination, and excite more violent emotions in particular minds, absorbing, as it were, the whole being. Where the understanding is weak, while the imagination is bright and vivid, religious impressions are always strong and violent. The excitement caused by them seems at length to affect the nerves, bringing the mind into a morbid state of melancholy and despondency. In this state the religious mind is affected by the passion of fear, in much the same way as it affects the man whose weak mind is weighed down by distress or affliction in temporal affairs. There can be no confidence in God. His mercies and promises are forgotten in the dark view of his wrath and judgments; the prospects of the joys of heaven and salvation of the soul produce less influence than the pains of hell and the terrors of the last day. In God, they are more inclined to see the avenging Deity and tremble, than the merciful Judge.

7. Fanaticism and superstition are the monsters begot by such minds. The first religious impressions on a weak

and sensitive mind are pure and holy; but often they degenerate into dark, morose, and gloomy thoughts, or become excited to vehement emotion, or reckless enthusiasm. In both cases, the understanding is frequently destroyed; and while one man ends his days in a mad-house, another rushes on to self-destruction. Such are sometimes the effects of mere religious impressions—arising more from passion and feeling, than soberness and reason; but they are not to be confounded with the influences of true religion on a well-balanced and well-regulated mind. Those impressions are to these influences, as fanaticism is to religion.

Than true religion, there can be no surer antidote to suicide, because its power is calm and tranquillizing; but to have that power properly developed and displayed, we must have a good well-cultivated field on which to sow the divine seed. If the tares of passion, the weeds of erratic emotions and ill-regulated feelings, are allowed to grow up with the wheat, we cannot expect a productive harvest.



## ON RESPECT FOR THE DEAD.

~~~~~

Symbol XLVII.—*Hominis vestigia ferro ne configito.*
Stick not a sword into the footsteps of a man.

~~~~~

1. IN the "*Oration on the Crown*," Demosthenes, in answer to a comparison made by his antagonist Æschines, betwixt him and the departed great of Greece, says, "who is ignorant that every one living is exposed to more or less of envy, while not even their enemies have any hatred to the dead?" For death, removing the object of envy or dislike, the feelings which may have agitated the breast with unforgiving rancour, and unrelenting bitterness, gradually subside, till hatred is followed by indifference, and indifference sometimes by more tender emotions. It is not natural that we should carry our antipathies beyond the grave; for it is certain, the better feelings of man prompt him to forget and forgive all injuries, when the cause of them has been called to his account. The grave seems to present a gulf, beyond which he dare not carry his feelings of envy or dislike.

2. But the symbol, though embodying the same principle, more particularly enjoins us to "*speak no ill of the dead*;" a moral lesson having force in modern as in ancient times. The dead are removed beyond our power; if we

attack them, they cannot defend themselves—a consideration which is admitted to enter into the attribute of justice. To us the dead can no more be objects of fear, of envy, or dislike; and if we speak ill of them, we are only perpetuating the bad passions which rule the human heart. The dead, whether our condemnation be just, or our calumnies unjust, are gone beyond the cognizance of any human tribunal; and are out of the pale of law, or province of punishment; they are gone to appear before a higher tribunal, where justice is meted out with perfect impartiality; where they are sure to meet the penalties of guilt, or the reward of virtue. It is the prerogative of God to judge; it is presumption in man to assume the power of God. All beyond death is wholly within the province of God's justice; it is impiety, therefore, in man to encroach upon that province.

3. After all, in life or in death, our judgment on man's character, his conduct, or motives, is liable to great doubt and uncertainty, which should make us hesitate and pause before we censure or condemn. Of the secret motives to action, we can have no knowledge; of the temptations by which he is beset, we can have little idea; of the natural strength or weakness of the mind to resist, or fall before the allurements of desire, or the impetuous power of passion, we must be equally ignorant. So that our means of judging are necessarily imperfect. The evidence on which our judgment is founded must always be deceptive; and if so, injustice must be common in our verdicts on man's character. We are not always to judge by the consequences of actions, or the visible features of guilt. In the worst actions there may be mitigating circumstances; the accused might plead those circumstances in palliation

of his guilt; but, if the grave has closed upon him, all means of defence are taken away, and how can his justification then be known? His defence might not clear his guilt; but it might soften the features of it, or diminish its actual criminality.

4. The charity, and mercy, and humanity of Christ towards sinful men, is an example, in following which we can never err. We find no harshness in his judgments; no bitterness in his condemnation. Mercy and compassion shine conspicuously, except where he has hypocrisy and Pharisaical pride to deal with. Then, indeed, his language is full of gall and wormwood. In the guilt of men, in the sinful soul, he may have found some good where to man all was evil; he may have seen causes operating that would tend to excuse the sinner, or, at least, mitigate the worst features of his guilt; such as the neglect of parental training; the temptations which assail poverty; the struggles of a weak and unstable mind against the allurements of vice and pleasure under which it at length succumbed; the unequal balance of a feeble judgment and a good heart, and many others not so obvious to us.

When Christ said, "Judge not lest ye be judged," besides condemning the arrogance of man in taking upon himself the prerogative of God, or the presumption of one criminal setting himself up as a judge of other criminals, he may have intimated likewise the incapacity of man to judge his neighbour.

5. If "*speaking ill of the dead*" cannot be justified, what shall we say of those who, with envy and malice, mangle the memories of the good? Who, with "deadly intent," slander and calumniate the characters of men of good report? Who invent, and then propagate falsehoods,

to justify and support their calumnies ? To stab a man in the dark when he cannot defend his life, or to asperse the reputation of one who is not present, which they dare not do to his face, are esteemed cowardly acts. If so, surely to "*stick a sword in the footsteps of a man,*" is a more infamous degree of cowardice.

6. Men of noble minds highly value the reputation they leave behind them ; their good deeds and worthy examples are, perhaps, the only legacies they can leave to posterity ; their greatest pleasure in death the recollection of a spotless life, and, therefore, falsely and maliciously to scatter slander over their tombs, or insinuate errors of which they were never guilty, or tarnish a character without reproach, or a name above suspicion, is what every good man must condemn.

## ON FUNEREAL POMP; MODES OF SEPULTURE, &amp;c.

---

Symbol **XXVIII**.—Ab arca cyparissina abstineto.

*Abstain even from a cypress chest.*

---

1. PERHAPS of all human follies, the most ridiculous and most inconsistent is that of funereal pomp; ridiculous, because a kind of satire on the abject corpse carried to the tomb, in which the former grandeur and show of life are sadly contrasted with the ideas of frail mortality; inconsistent, because if, as men, we are required to be meek and humble in our bearing while alive, the tokens of death should rather depress our humbleness to humiliation, than exalt it to pride. To express our lamentations and woe by costly and magnificent obsequies, is not less absurd. What can they avail to the dead? Little it imports, says Euripides, to the dead, if any shall obtain such costly obsequies. Ulysses, in *Hecuba*, begs they will build for him a lofty tomb, as a monument to late posterity of great intent and honourable deed. But the poet, as moralist, exclaims.

“How vain! where now is thy tomb, O Ulysses?”

2. Cypress coffins were of old deemed *luxuries* by the rich and great; and, perhaps, on account of their costli-

ness they were condemned. It is well known that the ancients were at times extravagant in the pomp of their funerals. They would squander as much in consigning an insensible body to its mother earth, as would have sufficed to raise a family from indigence to wealth. This vicious custom was carried to such lengths, that the state interfered by restraining laws, and made it penal to expend the goods of the living on the bodies of the dead. Solon, before our philosopher, laboured to moderate the expense of funerals, and after him Plato also. In the twelfth book of the *Laws*, Plato regulates the expense at a very low degree, for he forbids even the richest to spend more than five *minas*, or fifty crowns, on their funerals; and this the law of the twelve tables had also regulated for the Romans: "*Regum ascia ne polito*"—so says Dacier.

3. If the show, the pomp, and magnificence of funerals were intended as a moral satire on the humiliating frailty of man, on the transitoriness of his possessions, on the uncertainty of life, on the hollowness of his earthly greatness, on the galling spectacle of pride laid in the dust, and power stopped in its career by a greater power; they might be of use as lessons to the survivors. Otherwise, they might force a smile on the face even of weeping *Heraclitus*.

Surely death and burial are not such uncommon events, even among the rich and great, that we should mark their occurrence by pompous processions and outward splendour, as we commemorate the triumphs of warriors, or the pilgrimages of kings. "Behold the spectacle! Him whom they are taking to the silent vault of death is a man whose sole aim and purpose while living was the acquisition of wealth. The calm, the comfort, or what hap-

piness may be found here on earth, was given up for gold ; even honesty and fair dealing were sacrificed to the lust of a debasing passion—avarice. Now there his body is as unconscious of the hordes left behind, as if it had never been : What a dreadful spectacle in that pomp of carriages and magnificence of show, when we contemplate the wretched creature who has gone to judgment, and think of the tears, the groans, and sufferings by which they were purchased !” Again, “ See you that other procession of death’s tokens and symbols bearing toward another goal ? There we have the remains of a great man, who, in life, placed his pride and glory in his mental acquirements, and the natural power brought to him by their possession. His dress was plain ; his mode of life simple ; his manners free from pride ; despising, as all great minds do, display and ostentation. And yet behold how his cruel friends falsify the simplicity of his life, by the humiliating splendour of his death !”

4. To man there is something so awful in death, much that is humiliating, especially when pride, ambition, or power has signalized his career in life, that whatever ceremonies are deemed necessary should be consistent with the event. Absurd is it, nay, ridiculous, to carry him as if in triumph to the tomb, when we know that he is the conquered, and not the conqueror ; when we know that there is not a child so utterly helpless ; not a being alive less to be valued ; for, as it is said, a living dog is better than a dead lion : when we know that the body, which was the receptacle of his soul here, and in whose strength or beauty he exulted, is, or will be, the prey of the self-same creatures that gnaw and devour the slave ; when we know and are certain that the particles of dust out of

which that once proud-bearing body was formed, must, ere the final dissolution, mix and mingle with those he regarded with contempt as of a species inferior to himself.

Death is humiliating ! Humiliating to the great ; most humiliating to the proud ! And is it for this cause that the common language used in expressing the end of an ordinary man is misplaced by other words tending to mitigate the shock to human pride, when we speak of the death of the great ? With whatever words we attempt to distinguish the death of the nobleman from the plebeian, the event is the same, the issue the same, although differences may mark the circumstances of death.

O the sad mockery of man who cannot conceal the fact of death, though he attempt to avert his eyes from the humiliating circumstances of death ! With the poor, death is an ordinary event—over, gone, forgotten ; the shock is easy, the affliction soon passed ; but with the rich who have pampered their appetites, and brought upon them, by luxury and the undue indulgence of intemperate and idle passions, diseases of a painful and lingering kind, their death is often accompanied by sufferings the poor rarely ever feel. To carry such an one to the tomb with costly pomp and glittering magnificence, is nearly as ridiculous as the custom of the ancient Egyptians, when they carried about one of their animal-gods, itself the picture of weakness, but which the worshippers imagined had the power of divinity in it.

6. So much is attributed to mere forms and ceremonies, that we come to associate honour and respect with display and ostentation ; whereas we know they are no true indices of such feelings, but are often the contrary. We may express great reverence for the dead in more appropriate



ways. The hired women at ancient funerals, who cried and tore their hair, were surely not the deepest sufferers. Grief is silent when deepest. Affliction is simple, not showy, and may be deeply felt without a groan, or the falling of a tear.

7. The result of dying has ever been the same; but in the manner of burying we have varieties and differences that are worth noting in this essay.

It was a popular belief (perhaps only a poetical fable) that the souls of unburied bodies were doomed to wander one hundred years on the Stygian shores; in those gloomy realms,

“ Where Cocytus deep and wide  
Rolls along his sullen tide.”

Virgil says, that when his hero descended to the regions below, he saw spirits of the unburied dead wandering here and there, unhappy and dejected. Their penance over, Charon (who had refused their entreaties till now) cheerfully wafts them across the lake, and then they are at rest for ever.

Among the Greeks much the same notion prevailed, which could not but make them solicitous about the last obsequies to the dead. They believed the soul would not pass into Elysium till the body was consigned to the earth. Thus we find Homer introduces the soul of Elpenor earnestly beseeching Ulysses to give him “ the possession of a peaceful grave.” The Athenian laws strictly forbade the inhumanity of passing by a dead body without first burying it. In a religious sense, the neglect of so obvious a duty excited the indignation of Pluto, and would, sooner or later, be punished in the transgressor. Thus, duties

to the dead were sacred, and their neglect was considered infamous.

8. Some nations buried their dead ; others burned them first and then buried their ashes ; while others embalmed them. When the body was burned on the pile the ashes and bones, left unconsumed, were carefully collected by the relatives of the deceased and placed in an urn, which was scrupulously preserved. This was done effectually by sometimes enveloping the body in *asbestos*, a mineral fibre resembling cloth, over which fire has no power.

Euripides, in the "*Suppliants*," assigns a kind of reason for burying the dead, besides the mere duty which nature seems to impose upon us ; he says the custom was an old law which had received the sanction of the gods. Each part which contributes to the frame of man returns whence it was taken ; the soul to the ethereal sky, the body to its earth, and nothing is our own save this breathing space of life. The earth, then, which sustained the body while alive, should receive it when dead.

9. As we have already observed, at the funerals of people of distinction, among the antients, immense sums were sometimes squandered ; extravagance and display were carried to a degree far exceeding any thing known amongst us. Mourners were hired to pour out their insincere lamentations ; to bewail the dead with cries bought with a price, and sing and laud their praises for a few coins. Gladiatorial combats, after the funeral, took place ; chariot races were sometimes run round the funeral pile itself ; and magnificent and costly entertainments followed this mock scene of mourning. The analogy between the funeral customs of the Romans and the Roman Catholics is curious and

striking. The former carried the urn, which contained the ashes, to the sepulchre, before which an altar was placed, and on which incense and other perfumes were burning.

It was considered a mark of piety to occasionally visit the tomb and strew flowers over it, as in that passage so elegantly translated by Dryden, beginning, "*Dii majorum umbris tenuem et sine pondere terram,*" &c.

" In peace, ye shades of our great grandsires rest,  
No heavy earth your sacred bones molest ;  
Eternal spring, and rising flow'rs adorn  
The relics of each venerable urn,  
Who pious rev'rence to their tutors paid,  
As parents honour'd, and as gods obey'd."

10. The art of embalming, brought to such perfection in ancient Egypt, is lost to modern times. It is by far the most curious and interesting mode of disposing of the dead in all antiquity ; not only by reason of the skill, art, and ingenuity displayed in the process, but more on account of the mythologic doctrines, dark and mysterious, that gave origin to the custom. The Egyptians embalmed their multifarious gods, as cats, dogs, birds, &c., as well as human beings. The process may thus briefly be described :—When the body was given over to the embalmer, it was scrupulously washed and cleansed ; the brain and the whole of the intestines were then extracted, and the cavity filled up with the proper ingredients ; the body was then sewn up, and elaborately enveloped in folds of cloth, of various textures, previously steeped in a bituminous substance, making the body wholly impervious to the external air. The cloth was strongly bound round with ligatures, which were drawn so tightly as, in some measure, to preserve the shape of the body. It was then put into

a chest or coffin, resembling its own shape, having a kind of portrait painted outside, inscriptions, &c., and finally consigned to the catacomb or niche allotted to it in the tomb.

11. The reasons given for such an expensive and laborious mode of disposing of the dead, are, as may be supposed, when all historical records are lost, merely conjectural. The popular or mythological explanation is, that it was founded on the doctrine of the metempsychosis, or transmigration of the soul, which was doomed, for the space of three thousand years, to wander about the earth in other bodies, as a purgatorial punishment for crimes or sins committed; after which period, having satisfied divine justice, it shall return to the body originally assigned to it by the Creator.

12. Here a reflection arises. The grand cycle has nearly run its course. The period is at hand when those souls should be emancipated. Even now, perhaps, they are going to and fro over the earth, each one seeking his own. Some may find their ancient receptacles, and rejoice; but others (unhappy souls, O how unhappy!) must lament the ruthless hands of Christians and Arabs, who have been for ages despoiling the mansions of the dead. Alas! alas! miserable spirits. They must for ever wander and search in vain.

To the shores of England the same power which is to reanimate their bodies, may guide their faltering steps; and we, rejoicing in our antiquities, may find them rummaging the stores of our public institutions and private collections, in quest of their tabernacles. We may, some day, with dismay, behold those mummies traversing our streets, or hear their moans in our repositories, calling

upon us, in piteous accents, to undo the bandages of three thousand years. Through the sunken sockets of semi-animated eyes, we may behold a Memphite peeping, and see blood again all instinct with vitality, that has lain stagnant as Lethe's waters for a period half as old as the world. In the accents falling from their lips, we may hear the language of Thebes, Heliopolis, city of the Sun, and at length have the maze and labyrinth of the hieroglyph explained by an ancient priest of Isis or Osiris.

ON THE PALM TREE AS AN EMBLEM: ITS FABLED  
VIRTUES AND MYTHOLOGIC CHARACTER IN ANTI-  
QUITY.

~~~~~  
Symbol LXX.—*Palmarum ne plantato.*

Plant not the palm-tree.
~~~~~

1. WE cannot do better, perhaps, as preliminary to our own reflections, than transcribe what Dacier has said on this, one of the most obscure of all the Pythagorean precepts. The reader shall have in this way an opportunity of comparing at least two interpretations, and deciding for himself which is the more wise, the more rational, the more erudite, or the more agreeable to the true philosophy "I have read this symbol of Pythagoras," observes Dacier, "but have nowhere met with the application; so that we have nothing to do but to guess at it. The palm-tree is very useful and of great service in the country where it naturally grows. Plutarch says the Babylonians reckoned up three hundred several advantages they gained from this tree; but when it once comes to be transplanted, it is no longer good for any thing, and bears only a wild sort of fruit that cannot be eaten. Therefore, when Pythagoras says, that we ought not to plant the palm tree, he means that we should do nothing but what is good and useful.

We may likewise give this symbol another interpretation, which appears to be as good as the former. The ancients said that the bud which the Greeks called the brain of the palm-tree is very sweet to the taste, but that it causes great pains in the head. Xenophon, in the second book of the *Expedition of Cyrus*, says, that the Greeks of Clearchus's army fell sick with eating it. So that Pythagoras might, by this symbol, mean to exhort us to avoid whatever is pleasant and delightful at first, but in the end causes trouble and vexation of mind." In which passage the reader may find, if he seek for them, a great deal of very bad reasoning, worse logic, foolish credulity in fabulous statements, and much useless learning; all which we shall attempt to compensate for in the sequel.

2. The palm was, as every one knows, emblematic of greatness and of honour; its branches being used also to crown the victorious in battle. *Plurimarum palmarum homo*, seems to have been a proverbial expression among the Romans for a soldier of merit. "Pliny speaks of the various species of palms, and of the great repute in which they were held by the Babylonians;" says Bryant. "The noblest of them were styled the Royal Palms; and he supposes they were so called for their being set apart for the king's use." The same tree is often mentioned in Scripture as an emblem. "It was so remarkable in Judæa," observes that excellent writer Sir Thomas Browne, "that in after-times it became the emblem of that country, as may be seen in the medal of the Emperor Titus, with a captive woman sitting under a palm, and the inscription of *Judæa capta*. And Pliny confirmeth the same when he saith, *Judæa palmis inclyta*." The Hebrews carried the boughs of palm-trees at some of their festivals, parti-

cularly at the celebration of their nuptials. And we find that this tree was highly esteemed, from various passages of Scripture, as when Solomon says, in the Songs that go under his name, "How fair and how pleasant art thou, O love, for delights; thy stature is like a palm-tree;" as in the Psalmist, "The righteous shall flourish like a palm-tree;" as when they were strewed before Christ in going up to Jerusalem; as said of the angelic host in the Apocalypse, who stand before the Lamb, with palm-branches in their hands.

The Jews thought they had an influence at births: the same idea we find commonly prevail in ancient Pagan writers, as in the *Ion* of Euripides, where Latona is represented as reclining against a palm-tree when about to give birth to Apollo and Diana. Homer says they were born under a palm-tree. The women of Greece held palm-branches in their hands to procure an easy delivery. Classic writers, indeed, abound in the strongest proofs of the estimation in which the palm was held on account of its noble properties. It seems to have been celebrated all over the world; and even now it is used as emblematic of peace, as well as the olive. "According to Pliny," says a modern writer, "the Orientals first of all wrote upon palm-leaves; and Varro says the Sibyl wrote her predictions on the leaves of the palm. The Persians at this day impute to the palm-tree the virtue of preserving them from pestilence, for which reason they are found in abundance on their public ways."

There are, as we may see, a variety of peculiar properties ascribed to the palm, some true, but most fabulous. There is one mentioned by Aulus Gellius, which we fear is fabulous. "Aristotle," he says, "in his *Seventh Book*



of *Problems*, and Plutarch, in the *Eighth* of his *Symposia*, relate a thing really wonderful. ‘If you place a weight on the wood of a palm-tree, continually increasing this till the weight is too great to be supported, the palm does not give way downwards, nor bend inwards, but rises against the weight, and bends and springs upwards;’ for which reason, says Plutarch, ‘the palm, in contests, was considered an emblem of victory.’”

3. It was also an emblem of immortality, among people sacred and profane. This, no doubt, is the reason why the servants of God are represented in the Revelations, as standing before the throne in white robes, and holding palm-branches in their hands. They were the immortals purchased by the Lamb. It seems sometimes to have been emblematic of the resurrection also, because it was believed to die and revive again, *springing up out of its ashes*.

A particular kind of olive, as well as the palm, was esteemed to be immortal, as we find in Euripides :

“A branch of olive then I wreathed around thee,  
Pluck’d from that tree which from Minerva’s rock  
First sprung ; if it be there, it still retains  
Its verdure ; for the foliage of that olive,  
Fresh in immortal beauty, never fades.”

Hesiod says, that none who planted the olive ever gathered the fruit thereof ; the same peculiarity has been ascribed to the palm. The laurel was also esteemed a sacred plant, as we may find in this and other passages from the poets, which describe the births of Apollo and Diana :

“Delos abhors thee, and the laurel boughs,  
With the soft foliage of the palm o’erhung,  
Grasping whose round trunk with her hands divine,  
Latona thee her hallow’d offspring bore.”

It was generally thought that the palm was a tree that

lived to a very long period, and of remarkably slow growth ; so that he who planted one could never hope to see it in its maturity and perfection. Rising again, after decay, from its own ashes, gave it the character of perpetual life and vigour, so that it can never be said properly to die. The fabulous bird *Phoenix* has been supposed, not without reason, to be nothing but the palm tree ; and the story of its rising again from its ashes is an allusion to the peculiar character of the palm. Bryant curiously observes that the Greeks mistook the palm-boughs of *Hermes* for feathers, and thus gave him wings to his feet ; so have men mistaken the branches of the tree for feathers, and converted the tree *Phoenix* to the bird of that name. The Greeks were guilty of many ludicrous errors of this kind, however impossible it may appear. The sacredness of the palm existed long before they were a nation ; and it was in the act of transferring a foreign mythology to their own country, or in subsequent ages reviving their own primitive religion, that they fell into those absurd mistakes.

4. After giving the reader these specimens of curious learning and antiquarian lore, which must increase still further his opinion of our great industry and deep erudition, we shall now attempt to divulge the meaning of this mysterious symbol. From former experience, we may infer that it has relation to some peculiar feature of the palm-tree ; and it is under this peculiar feature that the moral is to be found ; for the literal sense is only useful as indicating the concealed meaning. That peculiar, or characteristic quality, is the long period it takes to grow, and the old age it attains. To plant a palm-tree, therefore, is to undertake any work, whatever it be, which we can never hope to bring to an end. Whether in youth, in manhood,

or in old age, it is folly to begin what we are certain we can never finish. If it be a work of long duration, which we may hope to see concluded, there is a presumption and a reliance on the continuance of life, which we know to be foolish. But so it is with unreflecting man ; he plants and sows, and never dreams of another reaping. In old age, when he has reached that period beyond which death is nigh at hand—even by the decay of nature—he still plants the palm, begins works which he can never see ended, and lays plans of others yet more extensive, oblivious of the narrow channel which divides him from eternity.

## ON SIMPLICITY OF TASTE.

---

**Symbol LXX.**—Quod elixum est ne assato.  
*Roast not that which is boiled.*

---

1. IF in all cases we had implicitly followed the received interpretations of these symbols, we could not have assumed that lofty tone of admiration and applause justly due to the moral lessons and practice of the Pythagoreans ; nor could we have gratified the reader with that surprising variety we have sought after and obtained. For example, as respects the above symbol, it appears that Athenæus, and after him Dacier, thought it was a mere proverbial phrase, expressive of the superiority of *boiling* over *roasting* ; because he found that the Athenians, when they sacrificed to the Seasons, boiled, and did not roast the meats they offered, thereby imploring these goddesses to avert from them sultry heats and excessive droughts. Such may have been the case ; but we cannot think this to be any explanation of the symbol at all, though very possibly Pythagoras may have taken the proverb, as we know he did in other cases, for the purpose of forming the symbol.

If it were to be taken literally (which really no symbol

can be), how could we reconcile a precept of this kind—evidently in allusion to the mode of dressing animal food—with the undoubted practice of the Pythagoreans in their unsophisticated purity, in abstaining from animal food altogether?

It would perhaps be a better solution of the symbol to suppose it to have been intended as an injunction against being too nice, too curious, or too fastidious in matters concerning the palate; against excessive luxury at the table; or too lively a zest in the enjoyment of sensual pleasure, which at length tends to pervert the natural and simple taste, and drives the sensualist to the concoction of new devices, and the invention of artificial stimulants and provocatives, to please the cloyed and satiated palate; preferring the highly seasoned “flesh pots of Egypt” to the pure, simple manna of heaven. Or, again, it might point to the condemnation of “works of supererogation,” or undertakings of any kind which have nothing to recommend them but novelty and uselessness.

But we attach to the symbol a more comprehensive sense than any of these, namely, *Simplicity of Taste*, generally, as a grace or virtue springing spontaneously from a refined mind *de natura*, or formed by due cultivation of the moral virtues; for simplicity of taste bears a nearer alliance to moral virtue than may at the first glance appear. It has, therefore, an universal application to Taste, both in relation to the moral and corporeal nature of man; but chiefly in relation to the first, because the second is a consequence or result of the moral quality.

2. Purity or simplicity of taste is both natural and acquired; but those who possess it in perfection are mainly indebted to the bounty of nature, as others are who have

grace and elegance of manner, or an ear for music, or a taste for poetry. In them it is the necessary result of moral propriety in the mind, and seems, in a manner, to proceed as an effect of antecedent causes in the soul, flowing from the innate harmony of the whole being ; just as the love of virtue, the emotions of benevolence and goodness, and peace of mind, exist in the human soul before they are outwardly developed. Every virtue may be rendered more perfect by cultivation ; so the taste may be purified and exalted by culture and due exercise. In truth, the taste, in relation to morals, has by nature a very circumscribed orbit, as its full perfection and development depend on the comparisons and contrasts derived from the external world. It must first obtain the idea of the beautiful before it can know what beauty is ; it must have ample experience before it can assume to itself a standard of propriety to which it brings all things to conform.

3. If some have the germ of taste in the soul by gift of nature, which is, in after life, by cultivation and experience, brought to influence the life, ideas, pursuits, and thoughts ; so others again are not only without the bud or germ, but, do all they may, they never can acquire simplicity of taste, as if an antagonistic power existed to make it a thing impossible. He whose ear is dull to the sounds of music, or he who is without any vestige of poetry in his soul, or the man without the gift of speech, may as hopelessly apply to become musical, or poetical, or an orator, as the man, rough and uncouth by nature, can ever hope to acquire purity, simplicity, and elegance of taste.

4. The same differences we observe in individuals, extend sometimes to nations ; for in one we shall find pecu-

liarities which others may imitate or feign, but can never enjoy in the perfection visible in those from whom they borrow. As men without taste aspire to have taste, and only admire what others feel deeply and permanently, so nations are seen, in the same way, first to admire what is characteristic of another nation, then to borrow, and after imitate, as far as is possible. Thus the Romans, who possessed no natural taste or grace, admired, and then imitated, the Greeks; thus modern nations have admired, and now imitate, the descendants of those Romans in the art of music; thus foreign nations have admired, and now imitate, our insular love of liberty, and liberal institutions; the glory and light of one kingdom, as it were, spreading and blessing all others.

5. To say that the ancient Grecians reached perfection in taste, is only to give them that mead of praise universally allowed by every judge. Others may have reached a high degree of refinement, but the Greeks alone have attained actual perfection. The human mind cannot conceive any higher degree of art than is to be found in their sculpture and architecture; in truth, where modern nations have deviated from their style, they have generally fallen into gross violations of simplicity and purity of taste. Their sculpture, it may be said, is perfect, because a faithful copy of nature, and, therefore, easy of explanation; but how can we assign a reason equally valid for their styles of architecture, which are perfect also, and have become beacons and guides to all future generations? They had the human form as an example, in the one case (and it may be said it was in Greece, more perfect and beautiful than in other nations), but where could they discover in nature the prototypes of their temples and public buildings?

6. No doubt, the Greeks brought their taste to perfection by laborious processes of study, imitation, and culture, but, nevertheless, it must be admitted, the germ previously existed in the generic mind; or, if this be denied, it must be granted that circumstances of some kind (not known to us) disposed them mentally or corporeally to that degree of perfection they reached in matters of taste. Mere cultivation or civilization cannot explain the singular fact, because other nations, by the same means, would have shewn the same effects, which is contrary to all experience; for no one can deny that civilization, and even cultivation of taste, are not incompatible with a corrupt taste; as we may instance in the present age, in which there is scarcely one public building, or work of art, not a subject of ridicule to those who can judge of them by the highest standard.

The exquisite, refined, pure, chaste, and withal, simple taste of the Greeks, was to them as much a gift of nature, as the genius of poetry is to the true poet. All the power and civilization of Rome, in her most palmy days, could raise her population no higher than to be the mere imitators of their great prototype; and this may be said also of their poetry, literature, and oratory, as well as of their works of art.

Again, contrast with the ancient Greeks another nation of antiquity—Egypt, which was highly civilized, powerful beyond most nations of the old world, with a mechanical genius unsurpassed, with a taste for architecture, sculpture, painting, and, no doubt, of literature and philosophy, and see how triumphantly Greece emerges from the comparison!

The Egyptians aimed at the great or the grand, but they



had no taste for the graceful or the beautiful. Their ideas were perverted and corrupt, rather desiring to excite wonder and surprise, than refined pleasure and simple emotions. And thus, in all their works, they are at constant issue with nature; and they who violate nature, by human devices and fancies, are certain of having no simplicity in their taste. The Romans certainly fell not into those errors, for how could they, so long as they took the Greeks as their models? Their merit, however, was in the imitation of what is beautiful, and true to nature, and not as the original inventors; this genius was the gift of Athena to her favourite people.

Some have imagined, that the exquisite *beau idéal* of the Greeks was really derived from living examples in the human form, which, in Greece it is said, far surpassed any thing to be conceived of the people of our mixed nations now. And even that their moral perfections and graces of mind, as well as of body, were the spontaneous results of a perfect organization or physical harmony, which concurred to those ends; and that their virtues and national character, too, were determined by the same cause—the perfect formation of the human body.

7. Simplicity of taste, where it exists, influences, more or less, every action of man. It determines his character also, for when possessed, we shall observe none of that arrogance, vulgarity, gaudy ostentation, which mark the man of a corrupt taste; and every view in which we examine him, this refined quality of the mind is sure to display itself. We may observe it in his speech, in his manner, in his dress, in his house, and in all his ordinary occupations. It is graceful to the mind, as elegance is graceful to the body or carriage. As inborn gentility is

displayed in the child, so shall we find a pure taste show itself in him who possesses it.

8. Simplicity or purity of taste (for they are one) affords to the mind a higher relish of every thing beautiful, every thing to be admired, every thing to delight, in literature or in art. It possesses also a critical power (inseparable from it), and becomes the judge of every work, in which taste or beauty is an element; the pain or the pleasure being proportionate to the judgment in favour of, or adverse to, the object brought before its tribunal. It is severely just, as the judge, but truth is its aim and object. It is lofty and aspiring; and, instead of descending to a lower standard, by degrees, slow yet sure, it brings all up to its own elevation.

## ON TALE-BEARERS, &amp;c.

~~~~~  
Symbol LXXI.—*Mustelam devita.*
Avoid the weasel.
 ~~~~~

1. ACCORDING to Plutarch, it was supposed that the weasel brings forth its young by the mouth, and, for this reason, it was considered emblematic of speech, which, he says, comes from the mouth. Aristotle, however, to pass over modern observers, has sufficiently proved, even to the most sceptical, that this creature produces its young in the usual way. The error probably arose from the habit of the weasel, in carrying its young from place to place in the mouth.

For this reason it has been conjectured, with great probability, that Pythagoras, in the symbol, occultly alluded to the habits of *tale-bearers*, against whom he warns us. This interpretation we shall adopt in preference to that other one, where it is presumed he intended his disciples to refrain from the timid habits of that animal, which conceals itself from the light of day in the earth, and in the hollow places of trees; above all, from its propensity to live on animal food; for it feeds on mice and the smaller birds, which it ensnares by stratagem and

deception, and then carries into its lurking-place, to enjoy there in secret its anti-Pythagorean repast.

2. Theophrastus, in his "*Characters*," has a chapter on that variety of the human species, which he calls the "*Fabricator of News*,"—where he affirms that they not only lie, but lie unprofitably to themselves; and spend a most wearisome life in running from house to house, from the portico to the forum, with no other object or design but to promulgate idle tales, with which they afflict the ears of all they meet in their way. A man of this kind delivers himself to an acquaintance always with this *ad-dendum*, "I have told you this in confidence, keep it to yourself," though he has already spread the whispered secret all over the city. It is to gratify this love of the marvellous, he adds, that this man spends his life in the invention and propagation of falsehoods.

"Have you not heard the news?  
Cassander is taken alive!"

3. The character of no man is safe in the hands of a tale-bearer; not because he has more malice than other men, but because his perpetual loquacity urges him to talk of others' affairs, while his want of truth and exactitude makes him embellish and exaggerate. "As for talkers and futile persons," says Lord Bacon, "they are commonly vain and credulous withal; for he that talketh what he knoweth, will also talk what he knoweth not." His tales resemble snow-balls; they increase as they are rolled from house to house. A simple fact is soon wrought up to a well-woven piece of scandal; a venial fault is magnified to a crime; a mere surmise or suspicion becomes an actual event, with a beginning, a middle, and an end, like a

drama, and is narrated with all the circumstances of a real story. The tale-bearer is also a tale-maker, and there is no end to his inquisitiveness; his anxiety for news, and eagerness to spread them, are about equal; *to be the first* is creditable, and, to secure this honour, he will run off with a mere fragment, and out of this fragment of a rumour, will fabricate a complete history. Avoid the weasel, says the symbol—*Percontatorem fugito, nam garrulus idem est*—"Avoid an inquisitive man, for he is also a tell-tale," says the Latin phrase.

4. In the countenance of a tale-bearer, an acute observer may perceive the "piece of news" before it is uttered; he sees the mountain swelling with the mouse before it is brought forth;—in that solemn face may be marked the importance of something that is to create surprise, whose novelty is expected to give delight. Behold how the fashion of his countenance changes when in quest of news! "The newsmonger," says Theophrastus, "meeting an acquaintance, puts on a grimace to suit the occasion, and, grinning, asks eagerly, "Whence come you? What say you? Have you any fresh news of this affair?" Without this excitement he could not live. From house to house he is seen going with a quick and eager step; from the portico he rushes to the forum, addressing every one he meets, and asking, "What news?" His eye is dilated with curiosity,—his mouth has all the marks of incontinent loquacity; the character of the man is indelibly stamped on his person. He thus lives from day to day on the transient changes of the world; without this daily stimulant, he would fall into lethargy, if not idiocy; for he has no resource in himself, nor in any thing else. His mind resembles the surface of a wall, which receives the images

and flickering shadows of things, but never retains them long. He has the capacity to lie, invent and propagate tales, but he cannot reflect or digest them. He sometimes elevates himself to the character of *tale-bearer* of politics, but he is better suited for the smaller sphere of a village, where, in due time, he may ripen into a full-fledged scandal-monger.

*Non est curiosus, quin idem sit malevolus*—"There is no busybody who is not also malevolent."

## ON DELIBERATION AND FORETHOUGHT.

~~~~~  
Symbol LXXXI—*De rheda junctis pedibus ne exilito.*

Leap not from the chariot with your feet close together.
 ~~~~~

1. It is the part of a wise man to deliberate before he acts. He will undertake nothing rashly or with hot impetuous zeal, but will consider the utility and consequences of his actions. It is the fool who plans without thought, and acts without premeditation. He plunges in *medias res*; and, when the evil is accomplished, he sees his folly, when all remedy may be of no avail. He desires a certain end, but considers not the impossibility of the means; he will leap from the chariot, but will forget that his feet are close together; like Thales, while gazing on the stars, he may sink into a ditch. He is not careless about the dangers of life, but knows not how to avert them. He is rash, but not courageous; prompt in doing, but in the end unsuccessful; full of sanguine hopes which are baseless; and zealous always without cause.

2. In any undertaking, the means should be adequate to the end, for otherwise we shall be laughed at as abortive schemers, and justly ridiculed for our folly,—of which there is no surer test than a misadaptation of means to an end. He who would clean out the Augean stable

must be equal to Hercules; he who would slay such a lion as the Nemean, must be able to wield a club as heavy, and possess strength as great. Not only must power be commanded in any great work, but there must also be perseverance, as well as steadiness of purpose, arising from a sanguine reliance on ultimate success. The constant change from one pursuit to another is fatal to any excellence in either. One great source of misfortune in life, is the rash heat with which men rush into any new enterprise, that presents a flattering or plausible aspect to his mind; for out of the thousand that are abortive, perhaps only one may succeed. Steadiness in gain shall bring more wealth in the end than all speculation. But men, though the experience of life has proved this again and again, still prefer the excitement of chance to the steadier course of events.

3. The uneducated mechanic will construct a machine that shall defy all the talents of the philosopher, however deep and learned, who has no practical knowledge of science; because that machine is the result of assiduous labour and perseverance in one occupation. If the mechanic had been as versatile as the plausible schemer, it is certain he would not have reached that perfection in his art. As with him, so with all great works in literature or in philosophy. Genius may conceive, but industry and perseverance accomplish. As with them, so with the occupations or callings of life—he only can attain eminence who has struggled on through all the degrees, and steadily persevered to the end.

4. He cannot be a wise man who leaps from the chariot with his feet joined together. He either deliberates not on the consequence of any action, or he seeks to attain



his purpose in a way dangerous to himself, which could as well be done with safety. Moreover, he does what cannot be undone; for the rash and heedless man can no more recall his action, than the man so leaping from the chariot can retard or stop his fall. This we may add, too, that there is no positive certainty in either case of those results happening which may be apprehended; the thoughtless man may see no bad consequence to his action, and the man leaping from the chariot may land in safety; but the evil, the danger, is in the want of deliberation and thought, and the consequent rashness of their conduct.

5. If the man leaping from the chariot broke a limb, or, if the man who acts without forethought found misery to be the consequence, both would probably repent and gain wisdom from experience. But still the mischief is done; it may have been greater or less. The precept of Pythagoras is intended to convey this experience as a warning to the heedless and the rash: so they may be wise without the penalties which the fool pays for his experience. Experience is often dearly bought, and all due gratitude should be expressed to those who teach us their experience without cost or reward. If we possessed a prophetic spirit, and could certainly foresee a fatal danger that would befall a certain man, which could only be averted by our caution and warning, should he not gratefully thank us as the saviour of his life? So should our readers be thankful to the great moralist whose doctrines we have expounded.

6. Here, in the last stage of this great work (when we may say that land is within sight, the final destination of our journey draws near, and when our weary pilgrimage is well nigh over), we may fitly apply the symbol to him

who is the author thereof. We put it to the reader, whether such a vast undertaking could have been planned without forethought and deliberation, or brought to a final close without that unity of mind and steadiness of purpose essential to all great works ! The execution may appear a small thing—for that we are responsible ; but the development of the symbols, the true conception of the philosopher's meaning—of the peculiarities of his system, his doctrines, his opinions, has been a work of labour greater than the reader may allow. We may truly say with Gibbon in reference to his immortal History, " At the outset all was dark and doubtful." Or, with Dryden, in describing the state of the mind in the progress of composition—" when it was only a confused mass of thoughts tumbling over one another in the dark." For at first all was conjecture and doubt ; the view was narrow and contracted, scarcely giving scope for a single thought worth recording ; so narrow and contracted, that it was a question in the author's mind whether he should not work out of those symbols matter for satire, mirth, and ridicule. But as he proceeded, the scene expanded, the view opened up, the mist passed away, and the grave realities of the moral world became at length plain and conspicuous. What was the author's surprise to discover, under those crude symbols, the ore of the most precious of metals ?—An ore even more precious—the very wisdom of Solomon—" more precious than rubies," far above all gold and silver ?—To find behind the device of a rough, rude, uninviting outwork, the noblest ideas and purest morals natural reason ever gave birth to ? To discover a sublime and comprehensive system only inferior to the Christian revelation, concerning religion, morals, and the conduct of man to others and to

himself? A system so pure, so profound, as to elevate the author above others more known, more renowned. We do not argue that the system is complete, or such as Pythagoras would have given to the world had he arranged and written it for the applause of men. It is far from being complete; because the symbols, as mere "*disjecta membra*" of some great design, were thrown carelessly among men, to be lost or gathered up as chance directed; without any view to systematic arrangement at all, they were given out evidently as rules and precepts for the conduct of his disciples, arising, therefore, out of the actual experience of life and the knowledge of man's nature. Where no system was intended it would be unreasonable to expect one. It may be supposed, moreover, that these are not all the symbols properly Pythagorean; for, while some have been added by disciples, others, no doubt, have been lost. The habit of teaching entirely by oral communication presupposes such a loss, as well as great liability to interpolations, errors, and false constructions. To imagine those symbols to have come down pure from the era of Pythagoras would indeed be a miracle beyond all belief.

7. The symbols, therefore, are rather matter out of which to form a system, than a complete system themselves. The same may be said of the Christian religion also; for therein system is neither intended nor attempted. And in this there is manifest wisdom; for while enough is given for man, to guide him in all the duties of life, by plain rules and precepts, no room is given for speculative opinions, cavillings, and such like, certain to exist where there is a system to war against. In a human system of any kind we can never assure ourselves that it will adapt itself to all ages and all states of society. The rules appli-

cable to one state of being may fail in another ; for rules have not the force of moral precepts. The simple, plain, moral laws are ever the same ; and, if founded on truth, are applicable to all ages and countries ; like proverbs and sententious phrases, they take a greater hold than any system, however beautiful to the theoretic mind, or perfect as a device of man.

8. It is in this view, that those symbols stand out in grand and imposing relief. Each is the concentrated result of experience and knowledge of human nature, which is wisdom. With a few exceptions (exceptions rather theological than moral) they comprise practical wisdom—every-day wisdom : they are rules of life and conduct to be practised and not preached. It was for this practical wisdom that Socrates has acquired such fame and esteem ; for he rejected as useless and worthless all the vague notions of men built out of philosophy and speculation ; and directed his attention to the real purpose of life—to man as he is, and not as he might be. The same turn of mind is manifest in these symbols ; the same practical wisdom ; the same knowledge of man ; but we believe there is a refinement and delicacy of the moral sense far beyond Socrates, or any other ancient moralist we know of.

9. *Hic labor, hoc opus est.*—This was our labour, this our work, to penetrate the veil by which these morals are concealed ; to fathom the purposes of the moralist and philosopher ; to drag from obscurity the treasures of ancient wisdom ; and to display to the eye of man the depth and power of a mind unsurpassed in the history of the world. It has been a labour of love ; but, nevertheless, a labour not conceived in our initiatory step, nor imagined in our original design.

## ON THE DIFFUSION OF KNOWLEDGE.

~~~~~  
Symbol LXXXIII—*Candelam ad parietem ne applicato.*
Place not the candle against the wall.
 ~~~~~

1. IN the composition of these Essays we might have made a greater display of erudition—a greater show of research; we might have piled quotation upon quotation, authority upon authority, as *Ossa* on *Pelion*, till we had dazzled the learned, and confounded the wise; but we had regard to the age in which we live—well informed, but superficial; an age whirling all men on in giddy motion, in which neither time nor taste is favourable to deep study and patient thought,—and perhaps wisely spared the infliction. So, instead of drawing men up to us, we have descended to the common level; instead of traversing the skies, we walk humbly on our native earth. Our desire, in this lower sphere, is to make men good rather than learned; wise rather than erudite; Socratic rather than Aristotelian; above all, Christians rather than Pythagoreans. But in this circumscribed field, if we have purposely withheld some ideas and thoughts of a purely metaphysical kind—too deep for the uninitiated—or some peculiar discoveries in the mazy field of ancient theology, we have given all that need be said. And having spread

the light of truth in full measure to the capacity of man, we cannot charge ourselves with any violation of the symbol before us. Thus much we have said in self-justification, lest the reader should accuse us wrongfully.

2. The pleasure of acquiring knowledge, and the pleasure of communicating it, are, in a great measure, reciprocal. The first is a pure pleasure, without any mixture of passion; the latter is more or less adulterated with vanity and applause, and sometimes with ambition. The power of knowledge is such as to buoy up the mind, to strengthen and invigorate it, and give it confidence in itself; so that a mind strong in knowledge has as much desire to display its power as the athlete the vigour and masculine powers of his body. There is then properly no selfishness, no exclusiveness, in knowledge; it opens the sluices of the mind, and flows out with spontaneous generosity; it spreads its blessings upon all without respect to colour or creed; upon the good and bad, the just and the unjust alike. Like the sun, it yields light without diminution of its power of giving light. The mind that pours out its treasures gives much, but loses nothing. The light which conveys pleasure and ecstasy to the soul of man exists in the mind that gave it, as if it had never been given. And thankful may we be it is so. If man valued his knowledge as the miser his gold, and sustained a loss, or diminution of his store, in the transfer, we might even now be groping in midnight darkness. O beautiful ordination, which allows man to give his riches, and be not the poorer! O wise law, that permits all men to be generous without cost! What folly, then, it is to hoard up the treasures of knowledge, when we lose nothing by giving, while we enrich all others!

3. In referring to the symbol (which we have applied to the diffusion of knowledge, though it may be otherwise interpreted) as an injunction against limiting the light and benefits of knowledge, though it may have been justly directed (not long since) against that almost extinct class of men who pretended to discover in knowledge a secret enemy to religion (though more truly foe of priestcraft, and arbitrary power), yet now the precept seems unnecessary, as the last prejudice against knowledge has been broken down. The defenders of the bulwarks of ignorance have been either defeated, or they are ashamed, and have joined the enemies' camp. The very diffusion of knowledge they hated and condemned, as fraught with presumption and infidelity, has been the cause of their downfall; and what wonder, then, they should have predicted its effects, and fought against it?

4. There is nothing in this age of which men are less guilty than in placing their candle against the wall; or, in other words, than in hiding their light under a bushel. The exclamation of Solomon the Wise has no terrors for them. Each displays his flickering light to all the world, and proclaims it to be a sun. But it were as hopeless a task to compute the number of those lights it would take to make a sun, as that debated in Thomas Aquinas—"How many angels can stand on the point of a needle?" "There is no end of making books," says Solomon despondingly in his days. And what may we say now with far more justice? Making of books! not writing books, but making them as mechanics ply their tools. Muses nine, who in days of yore poured down the genial spirit on your favourites and devotees, what think ye of making books?

5. The world is overwhelmed with books; the load

every man must bear surpasses that borne on Atlas's shoulders. Earth groans under the ponderous load ! Wisdom cries out in despair ; her voice, her still small voice, is lost in the Babel sounds of knowledge. The brook became a rivulet, the rivulet a river, gently gliding on ; now it is a torrent rushing with impetuous fury, and increasing from day to day. The end is not yet. That end may prove a deluge that shall swallow up wisdom, reason, and every good thing. O Thales, Pythagoras, Plato, Empedocles, ye are now called wise men ! Ye were deep thinkers, men of learning in your day, and yet your books were but a handful. Your books were indeed in your own minds ; there illustrated by the volume of human nature and man's experience. Each man now reads a thousand times more than any one of these great men ever did, but is he wiser ? What is reading, therefore, but a useless luxury, unless for thought ?

6. The facilities afforded to the communication of knowledge tend to increase it. Thus the art of printing has done more to increase and diffuse knowledge than thousands of years could have effected (if at all) in the slow and expensive multiplication of manuscripts. Its power is as the power of a giant. And no one can deny that it is a power possessed of godlike attributes. Although the good be not free from evil, in multiplying books without end, and weakening the reflective powers of man, yet it affords a diffusion of knowledge so universal, and at so small a cost, that every one may feel the benefit. The poor must have for ever been steeped in brutal ignorance but for this glorious blessing. Now, education and knowledge hand in hand actually elevates him to a superior sphere, as if he had changed his rank in the creation, from



animal to man. It may truly be said, therefore, that Christianity and printing are the great human civilizers.

7. If printing has created books, it has also indirectly created readers, while readers, again, have in proportion created writers. Some men digest books, some read them for information, but most read them for amusement, as a pastime or luxury. The latter class of society being by far the greatest, and consequently the least reflecting, a vast body of writers have come into being to satisfy their eager demands. They are shallow, careless, and superficial writers, but so are the readers they design to please. It is for this class that books are *made*—not composed. Not so much that the writers are incapable by want of ability, but because pecuniary motives sway them, and, to gratify their love of money, they run a race in which time is every thing, perfection or excellence nothing.

8. It appears to us, as not indifferent spectators, that this universal diffusion of knowledge, and the effect of the multiplication of books, are rapidly bringing all minds down to one common level. This impression is sadly confirmed by the disappearance of learning from the world, and the gradual decline of the higher branches of literature. There is no real encouragement for works of a solid and substantial kind; and hence the slow but certain decay of those great branches of literature which, in past times, shed such a lustre over the history of the human mind.

9. It has been observed that men come to the study of knowledge with a disinterested spirit, and singleness of mind; that at first they pursue knowledge for its own sake; but presently this purity of intention is overcast by the eager passion for a more genial and substantial

recompense in gain—pecuniary profit. The mind, under the emotion of nobler feelings, which would at first scout any pecuniary reward for its genius and exertions, soon falls under the dominion of the universal passion, and will slave night and day to gratify the propensity. It is not enough to obtain a competence by literary labour; the desire of wealth, and its advantages, is as strong in authors as in men of commerce. The day is long past when men would undergo greater toils for the less substantial reward of fame; when, indeed, the idea of creating wealth from the art of writing could never have been indulged, so low was the pecuniary value put upon works of literature, or of learning. In the contemplation of characters of this kind there is something delightful; their biographies, describing their devotion, pure and simple, to the pursuit of knowledge, and their undying eagerness to compass every branch of it—the labours they underwent, the privations they often endured, the obstacles they surmounted in the enmity of men, and the want of books, give inspiration to kindred minds, and awaken a strong desire of imitation. There is no more glorious example to a lover of literature than the lives and labours of these men. He who reads them, and feels not the power of enthusiasm, is not worthy to live.

10. How the scene changes from the past to the present! How humiliating to witness the mere mercantile spirit with which literature is now invested! How contemptible to find it the hireling of ignorant and presumptuous masters; the slave to be bought at a price! The standard of its value is not intrinsic excellence; not the obvious indications of genius, or the more certain marks of laborious learning, research, and deep reflection; but it

is computed by how much it will bring as an article of commerce ; by the number of readers (however witless) it may command. If this were always a test of the excellence of a book, then there are works that shall live for ever, and have already enjoyed, if we may so say, a brief immortality, which never have had, in their own day, so many readers as the trifling composition of a novelist, or the still lighter production of one who writes fables and stories for children. Those works, too, are not of a nature to have been undertaken for the desire of gain ; because popularity is a favour they never could have expected or enjoyed. The whole expense, in giving them to the world, must have been at the cost of the authors. And so much the more meritorious, therefore, their zeal for knowledge, and their pure disinterestedness, who did not merely sacrifice time and labour, but money itself, in its cause. Peace be to their hallowed manes !

doates on the child she most suffered for. Perhaps the love is greater, because undivided. As in Minerva, there is one only parent to receive and give affection. But the love one may have for a child, is often founded on reasons none other but the parent can understand. It is sympathy and natural affection (an instinct), which no stranger can feel. It is for this reason, that the parent sees beauties which are invisible to the rest of the world, and discovers pleasing traits of character, which are construed quite otherwise by indifferent persons ; and he may even be indifferent, or insensible, to deformities which disgust and repel all save himself.

It is against this blind partiality that authors are to be on their guard ; for in this instinctive parental affection lies the danger to their success. It makes them the most incompetent judges of their own works : a misfortune much to be lamented, for many obvious reasons.

4. The apologies of authors are rarely received with favour, because they are seldom believed. It is the humbling of the presumptuous spirit, when appearing before the judgment-seat of criticism ; humility more affected than real. Yet there are cases in which a writer may plead for mercy at this tribunal ; as, for example, where he is not a professional author, but loves knowledge for itself ; where his education has been neglected, and he yet has the laudable ambition of conquering the misfortune ; where (as in the author's case) he has no leisure to court fair wisdom, or drink from the crystal font of truth, or enjoy the sweets of literature and books, except in those hours stealthily saved from the cares of business and the occupations of life. It is clear, that any continuous work pursued under such circumstances, must be carried on with a

positive disadvantage. The same evils are likewise felt, in detached essays, as a want of unity of style, and uniformity of spirit; besides the liability to the repetition of the same ideas and similar expressions.

5. Though the symbol conveys an injunction against entrusting our precepts and admonitions to weak and effeminate minds, on which they melt like snow, and are lost, we cordially invite all, of weak or of strong minds, to partake of our banquet, as we give countenance to no exclusive spirit. In this particular, our benevolence is universal, and truly philanthropic. We may not offer nectar and ambrosia to tempt the luxurious; but a plain repast fit for the natural appetite, and easy of digestion, which no moderate or temperate guest will wisely refuse. May we hope that all will go away better and wiser for the entertainment. We expect this good result, if they will come with prepared minds—as they would sit down at the table of a friend, not with the sole desire of finding fault, but of enjoying hospitality and social converse.

6. Some readers will, no doubt, be repelled by the homely garb in which the symbols are attired; but let them remember, it is Falsehood and not Truth that is arrayed in showy apparel; that the dress of Wisdom herself is plain and simple. Let them remember that gold is in the ore before it is purified and made bright; that some most precious stones have, by nature, an uninviting aspect, before being cut and polished.

If they reflect on this, and turn to the contemplation of the symbols, they will most surely discover (what they conceived not at the first glance), that there is in them much that is wise and good; much that is noble and elevated; much that is pure and sublime; in morals and in philoso-

phy : which wisdom, and goodness, and nobleness, and purity, we have rendered more illustrious and sublime by the light of Christian truth. This has been our aim and purpose. The religion of Christ has enabled us to gild some precepts, dim from age ; to polish others, obscure from their language ; to illustrate where the light of eternal truth was apparent to the eye, though faint ; and, finally, to perfect all, by those divine ideas of the good alone to be found in that source of goodness and of perfection.

In this way, the thoughtful reader will be surprised at the result. Not only will he be more and more satisfied with the superiority of revealed truth in the contrast, but, at the same time, truth and justice will prompt him to award his mead of praise to him, who, amid all the obstacles of natural reason, the greater obstacles of a false religion and confirmed prejudices, could work out for himself and for his disciples such a noble and elevated system of moral conduct.

THIS WAS THE WORK

OF

PYTHAGORAS.

---

## ERRATA.

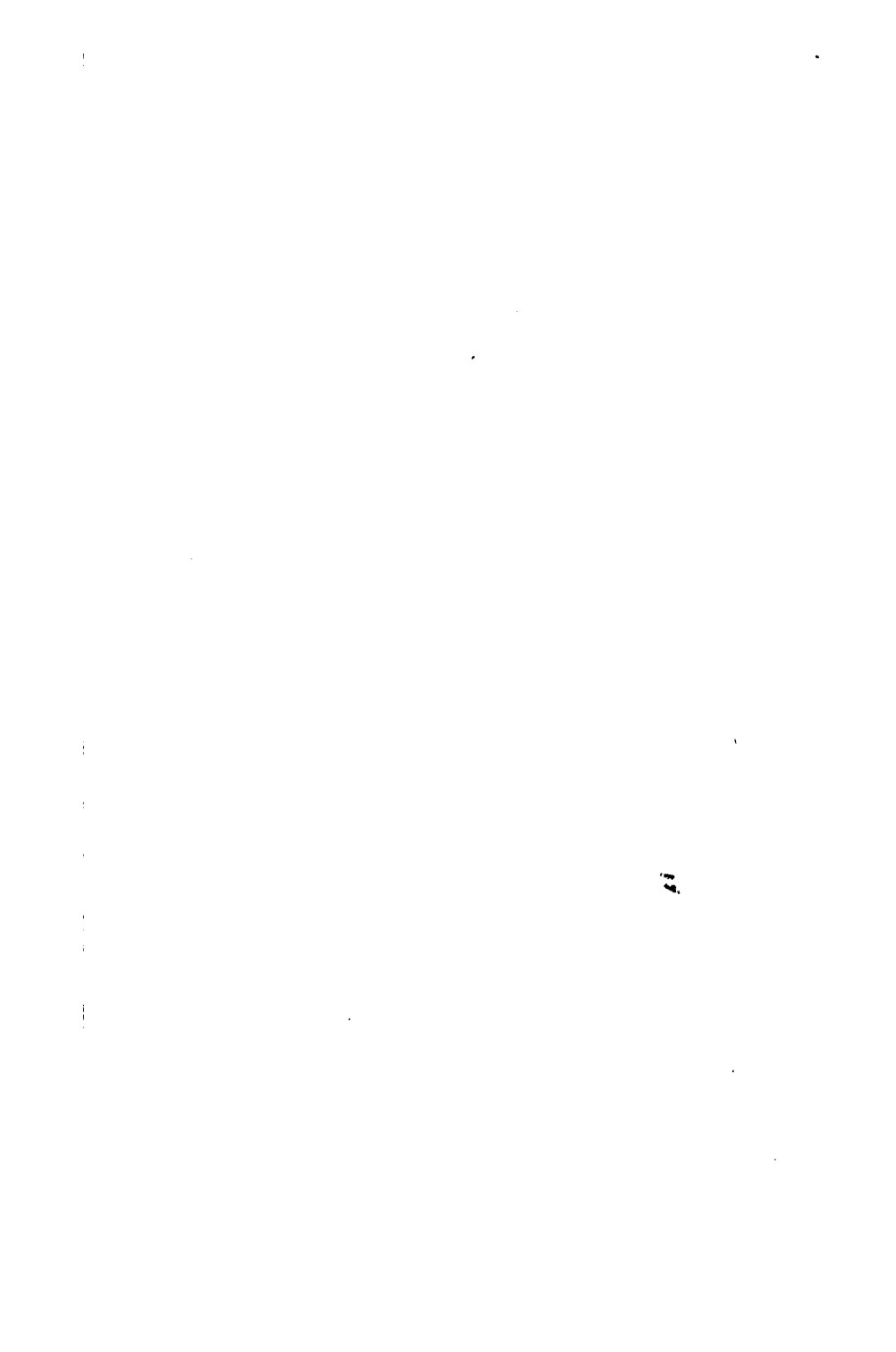
---

- Page 6, line 4, *for Foscola read Foscolo*  
... 32, Symbol, *for vedas read vadas*  
... 62, line 8, bottom, *for arial read aerial*  
... 76, line 16, top, *for man's read many*  
... 105, note, line 3, *for stand read sand*  
... 136, line 8, bottom, *for containing read outshining*  
... 162, line 1, ... *for usefulness read uselessness*  
... 173, line 15, ... *for affection read affliction*  
... 180, line 9, ... *for actually read acutely*  
... 198, line 9, top, *insert at the end "*  
... 246, Symbol, *for olio read oleo*  
... 297, line 7, top, *for firey read fiery*  
... 394, line 10, bottom, *for perpetrate read perpetuate*  
... 464, line 13, top, *for minas read mine*

18.

314  
H.S.











FEB 26 1930

